ROMANTIC TALES OF FANTASY!

VENUS

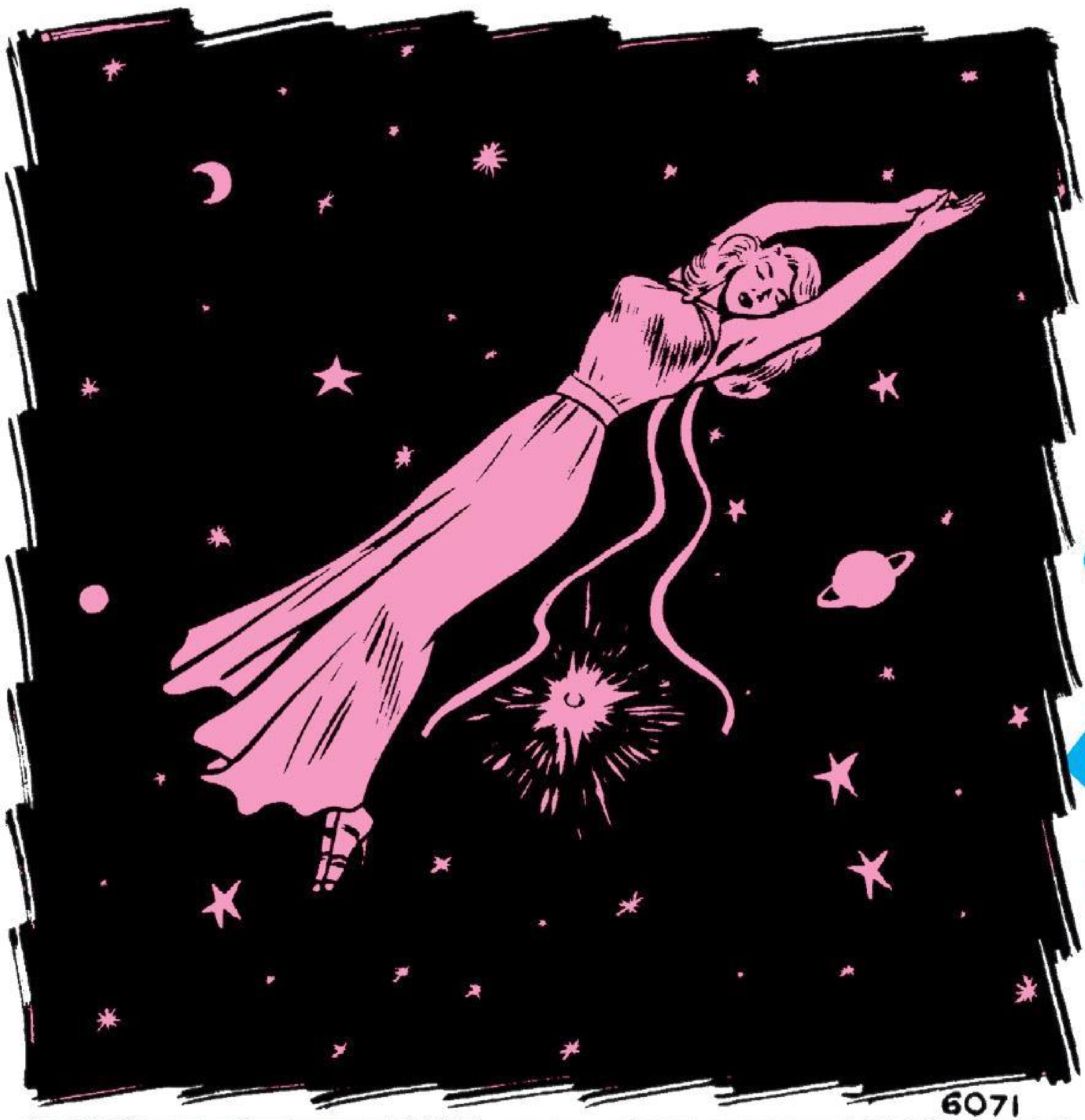
GODDESS OF LOVE!

NOV. NO. 7 10¢

"the ROMANCE that could not be!"

a LOVERS magazine

the WORLD'S MOST UNUSUAL LOVE STORY!

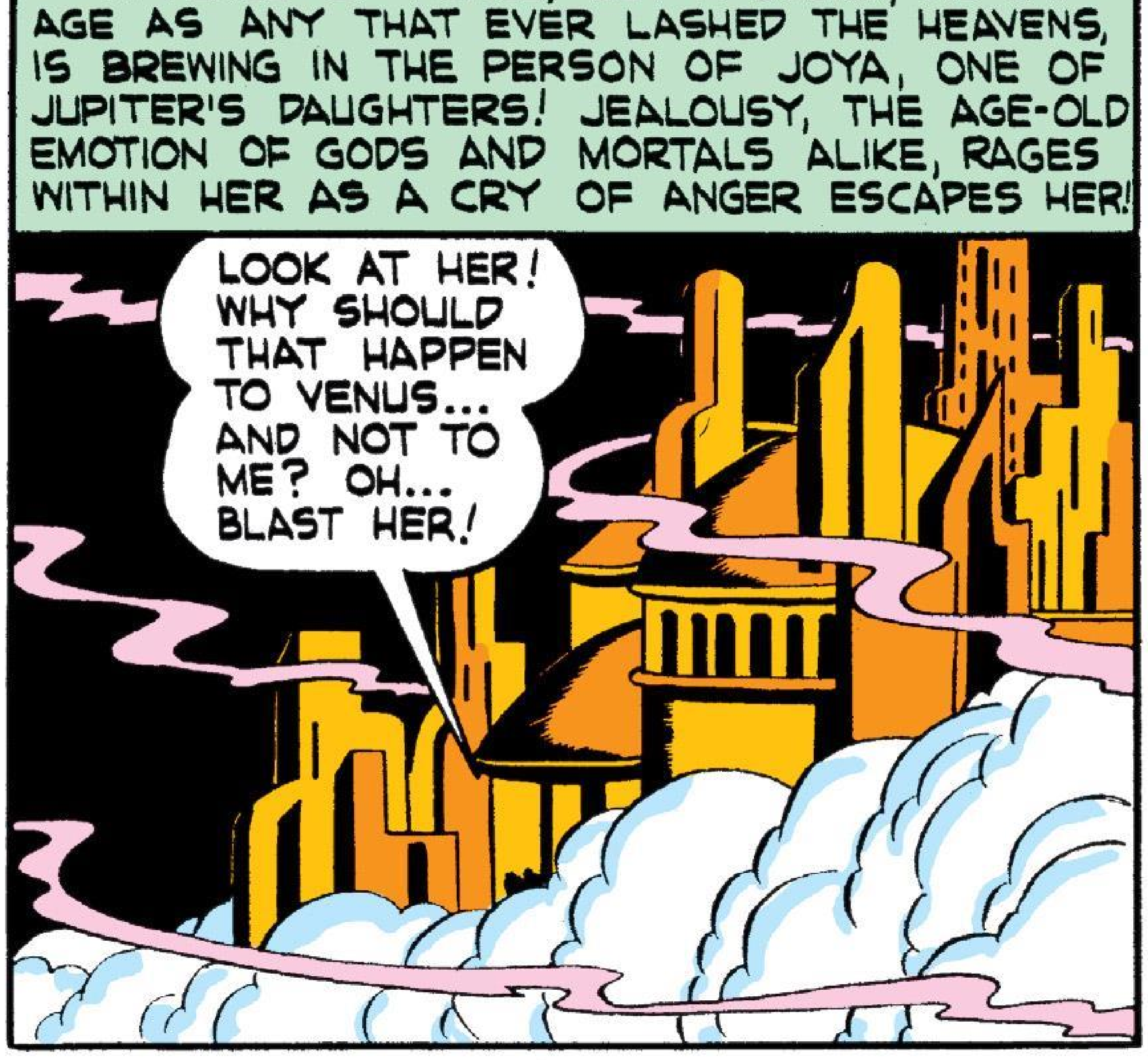


VENUS

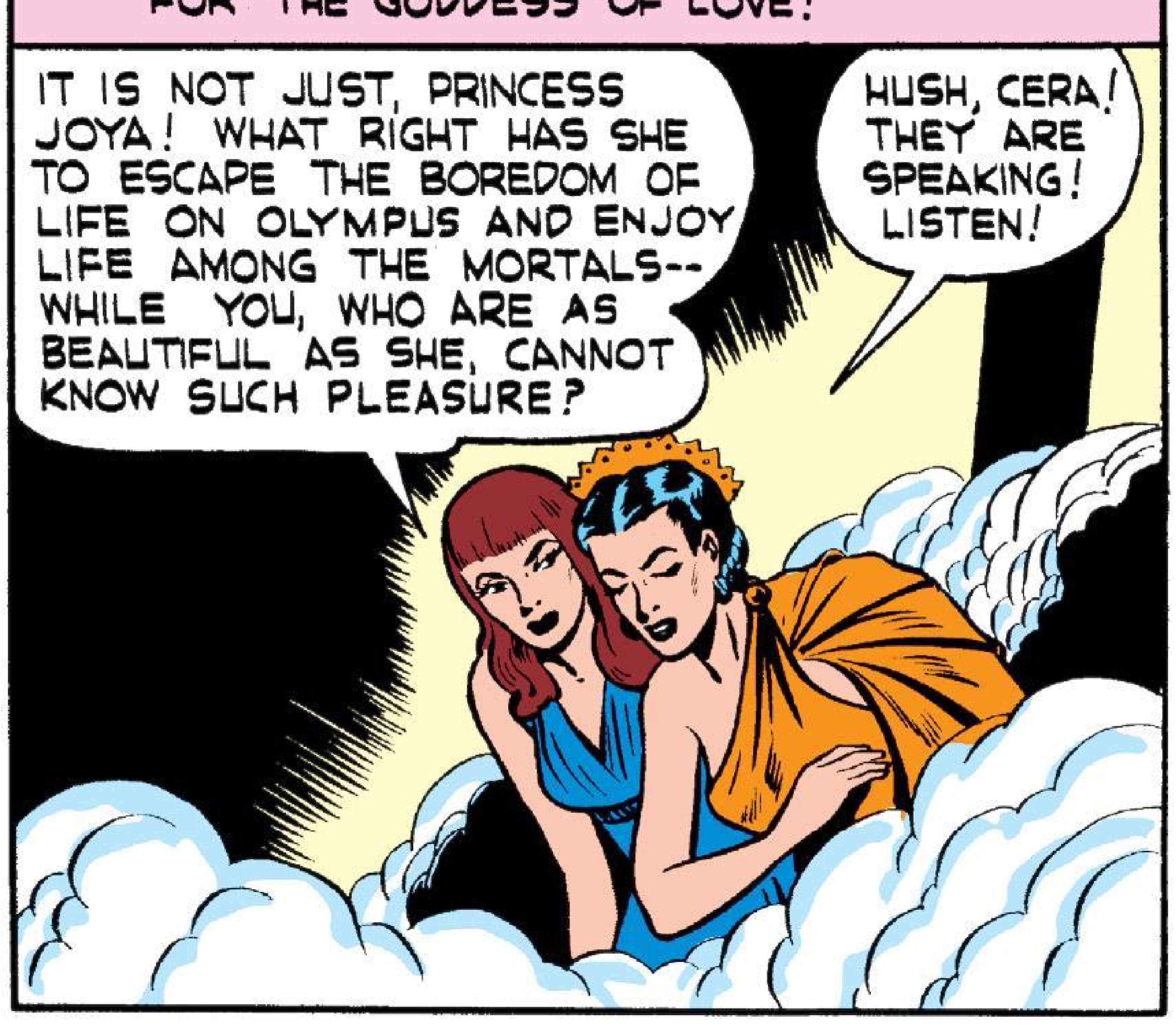
THE ROMANCE THAT COULD NOT BE!

CHAPTER 1

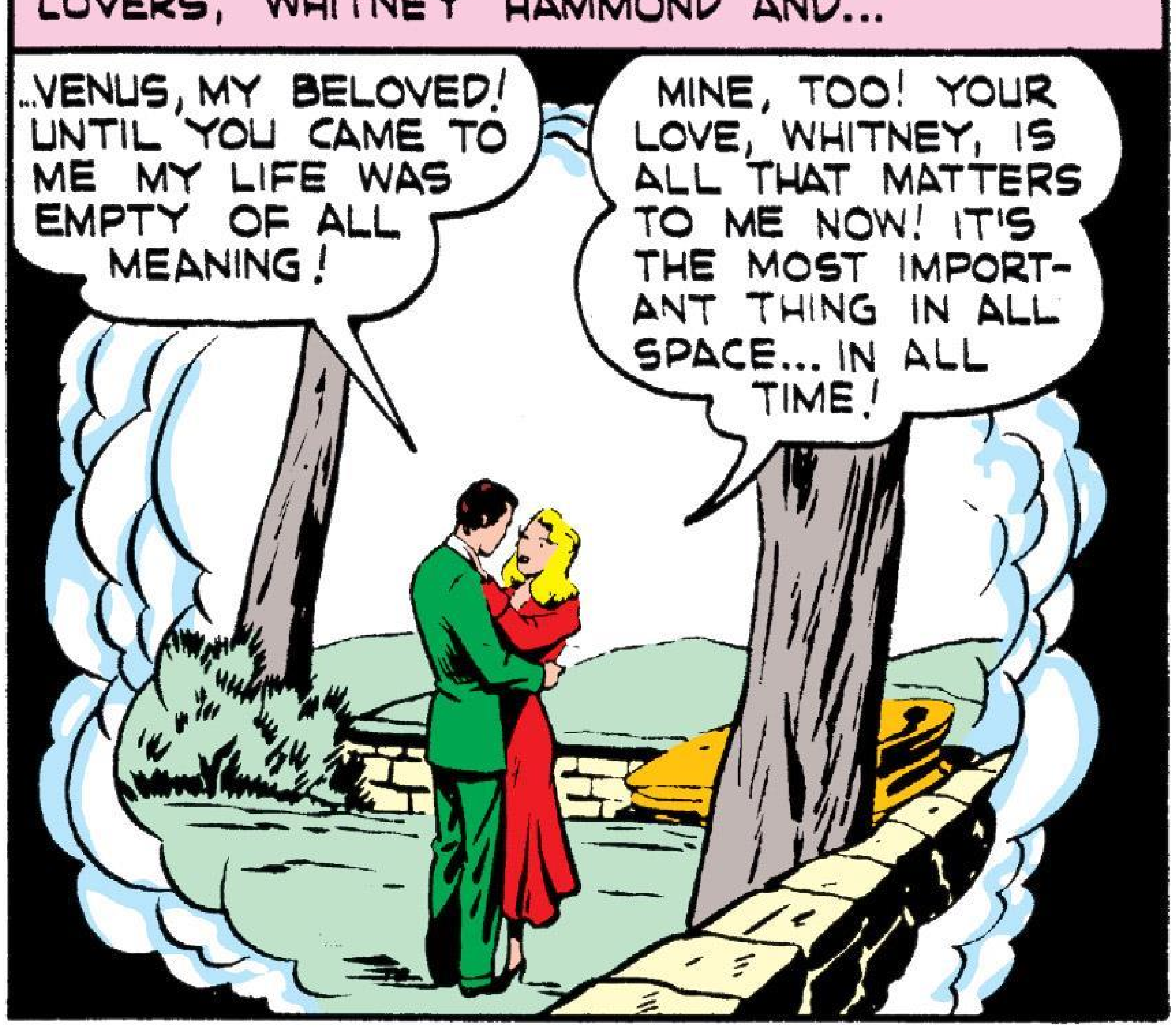
OLYMPUS, THE HOME OF THE GODS, IS USUALLY A PLACE OF PEACE, BUT A STORM, AS SAVAGE AS ANY THAT EVER LASHED THE HEAVENS, IS BREWING IN THE PERSON OF JOYA, ONE OF JUPITER'S DAUGHTERS! JEALOUSY, THE AGE-OLD EMOTION OF GODS AND MORTALS ALIKE, RAGES WITHIN HER AS A CRY OF ANGER ESCAPES HER!

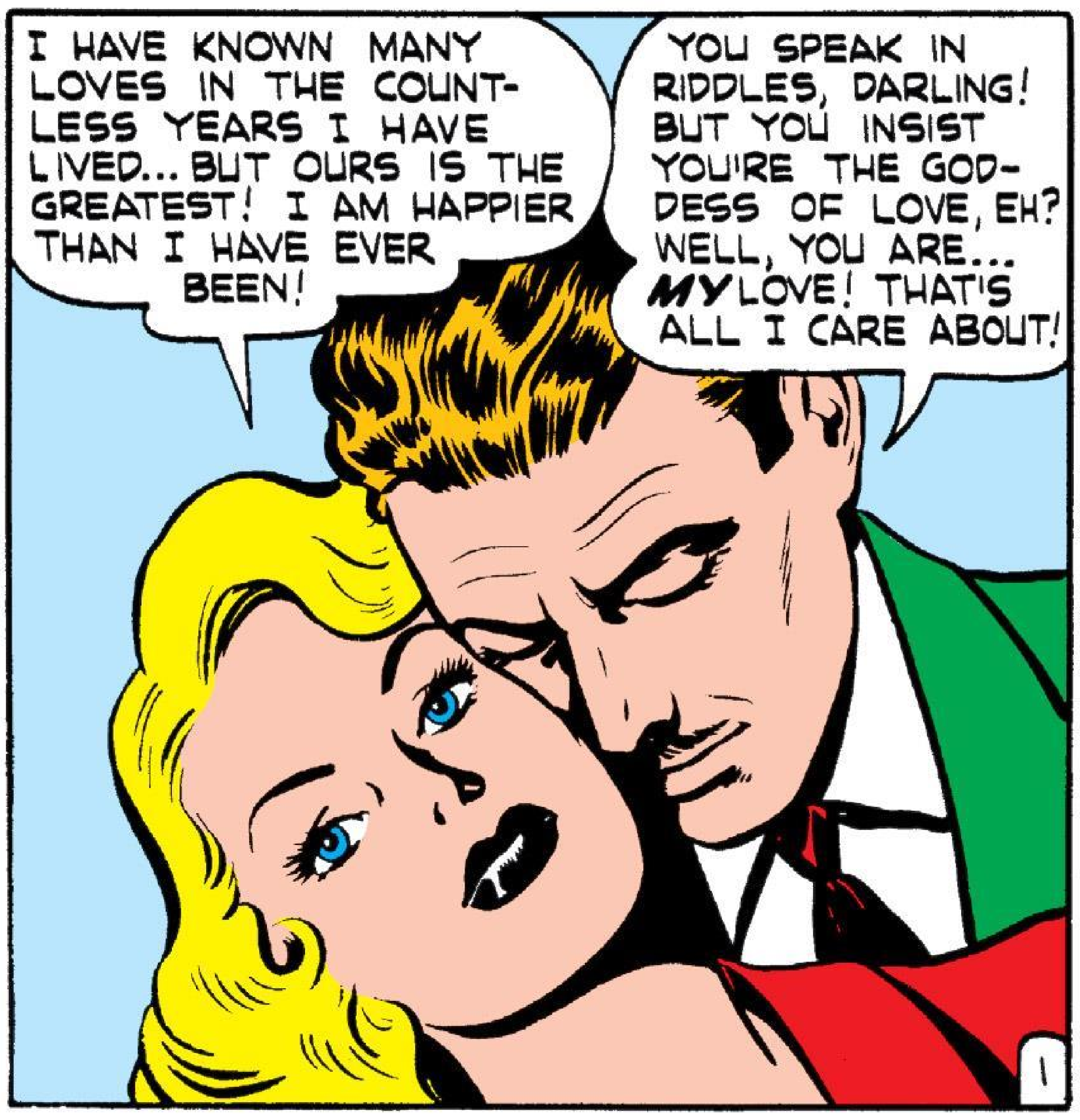

LOOK AT HER! WHY SHOULD THAT HAPPEN TO VENUS... AND NOT TO ME? OH... BLAST HER!

JOYA'S EARS ARE RINGING WITH THE WORDS OF CERA, HER HANDMAIDEN, SMOOTH AND URGING, FANNING TO A FLAME THE HATRED WITHIN HER FOR THE GODDESS OF LOVE!


IT IS NOT JUST, PRINCESS JOYA! WHAT RIGHT HAS SHE TO ESCAPE THE BOREDOM OF LIFE ON OLYMPUS AND ENJOY LIFE AMONG THE MORTALS-- WHILE YOU, WHO ARE AS BEAUTIFUL AS SHE, CANNOT KNOW SUCH PLEASURE?
HUSH, CERA! THEY ARE SPEAKING! LISTEN!

THE ANGRY EYES OF JOYA AND CERA ARE FOCUSED ON A PLACE ON THE EARTH! THROUGH THE HAZE OF TIMELESS SPACE THEY SEE TWO LOVERS, WHITNEY HAMMOND AND...


...VENUS, MY BELOVED! UNTIL YOU CAME TO ME MY LIFE WAS EMPTY OF ALL MEANING!
MINE, TOO! YOUR LOVE, WHITNEY, IS ALL THAT MATTERS TO ME NOW! IT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN ALL SPACE... IN ALL TIME!


I HAVE KNOWN MANY LOVES IN THE COUNTLESS YEARS I HAVE LIVED... BUT OURS IS THE GREATEST! I AM HAPPIER THAN I HAVE EVER BEEN!
YOU SPEAK IN RIDDLES, DARLING! BUT YOU INSIST YOU'RE THE GODDESS OF LOVE, EH? WELL, YOU ARE... MY LOVE! THAT'S ALL I CARE ABOUT!

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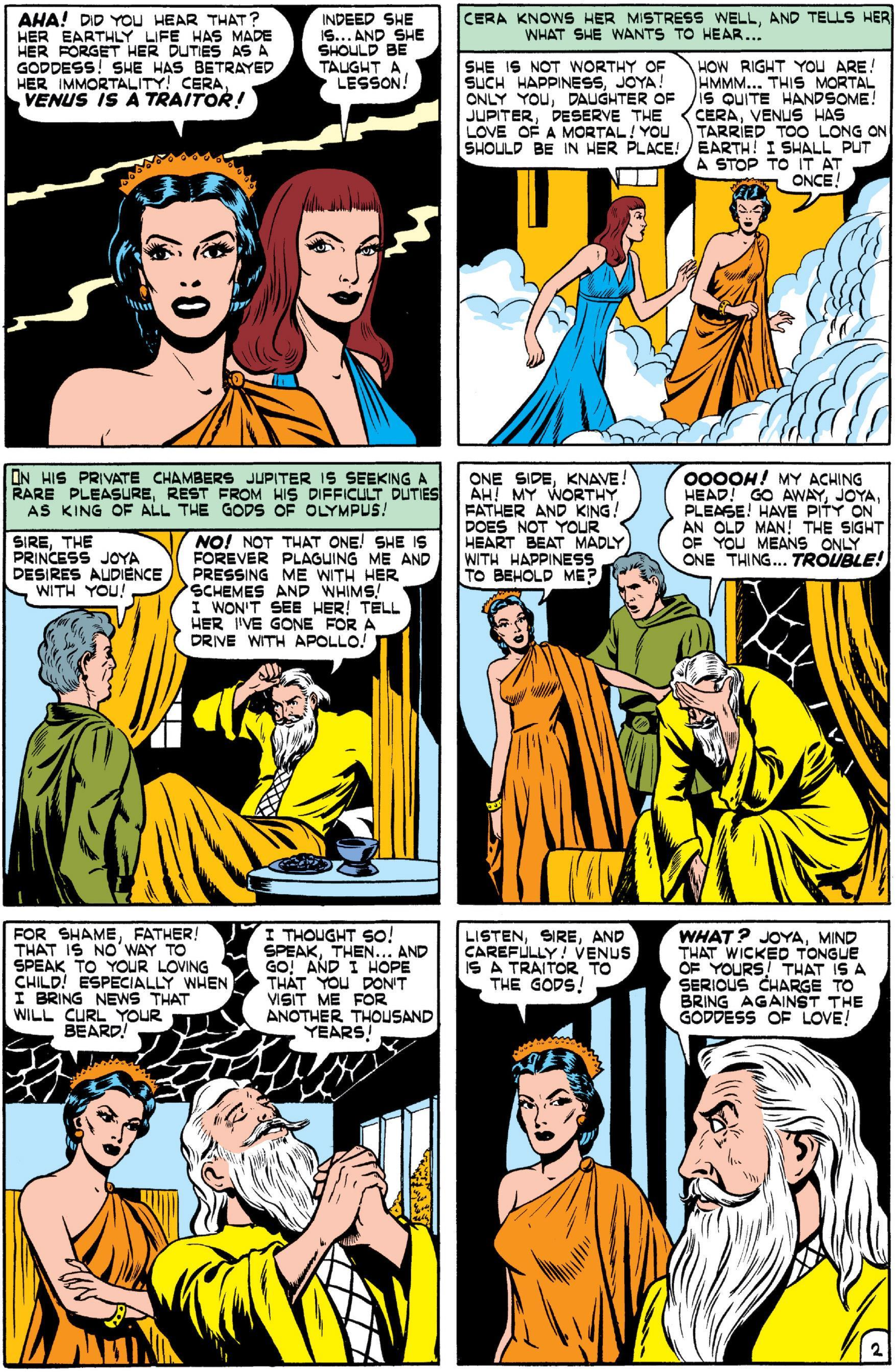
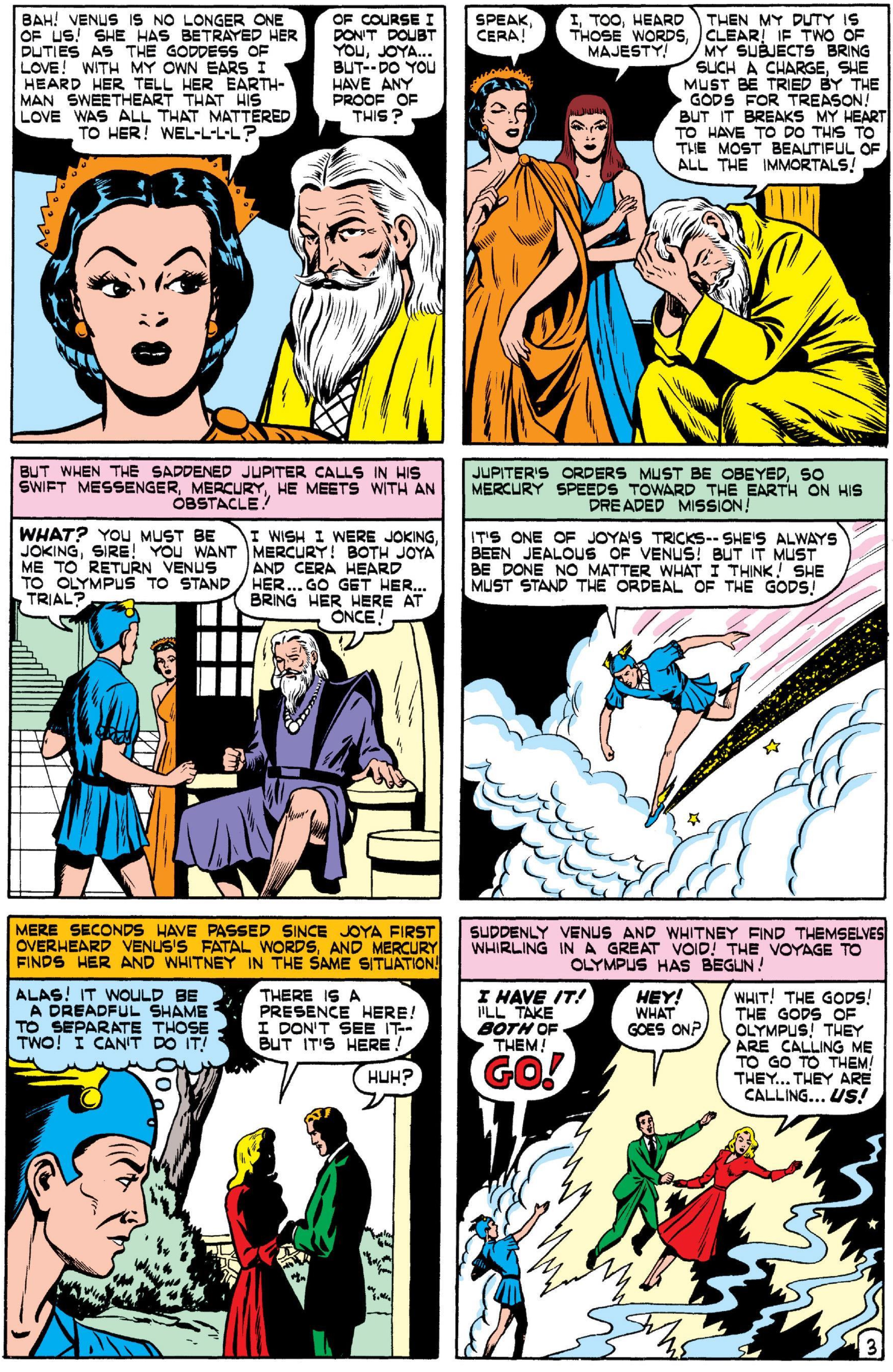
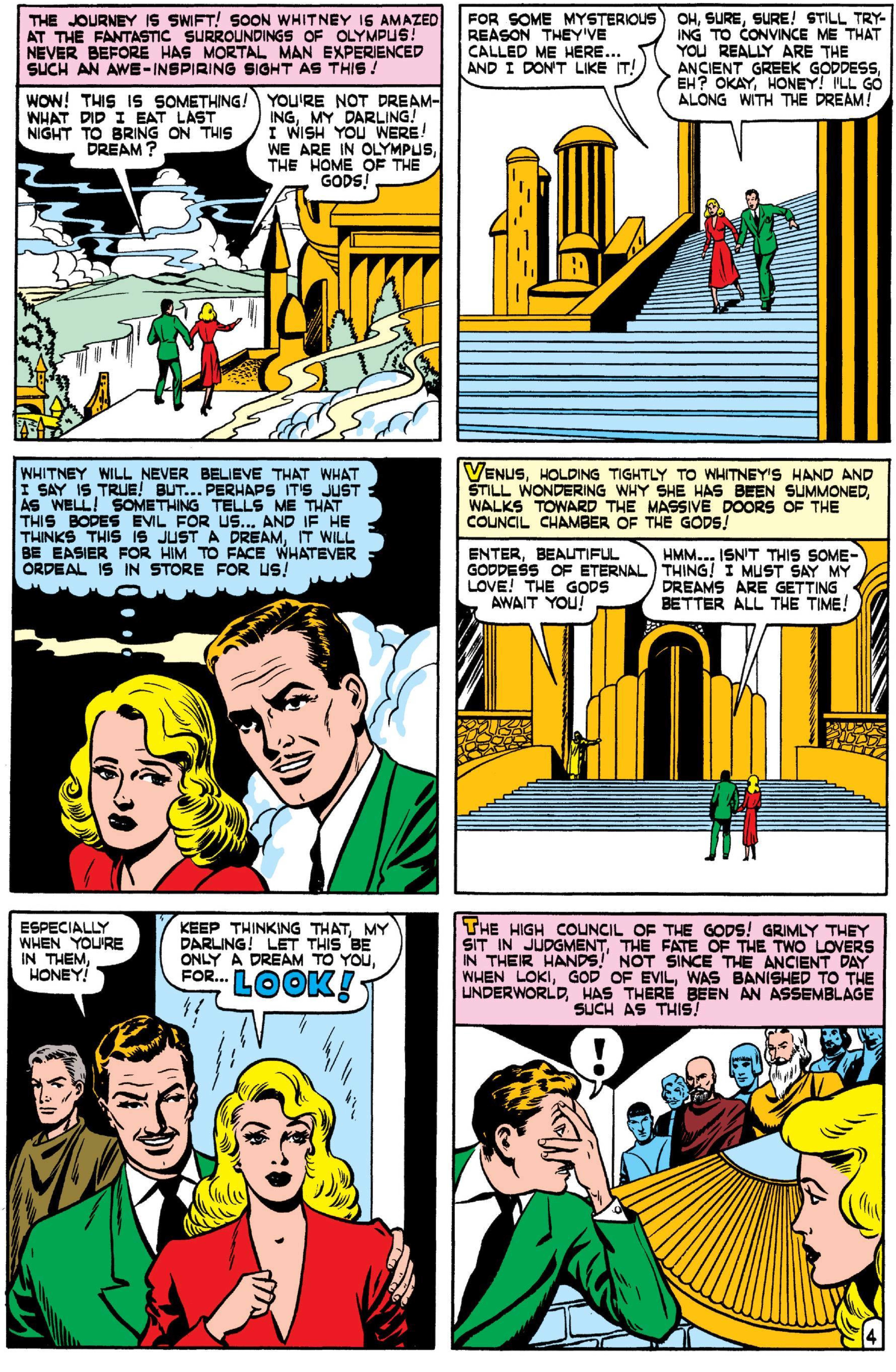

AHA! DID YOU HEAR THAT? HER EARTHLY LIFE HAS MADE HER FORGET HER DUTIES AS A GODDESS! SHE HAS BETRAYED HER IMMORTALITY! CERA, **VENUS IS A TRAITOR!**
INDEED SHE IS... AND SHE SHOULD BE TAUGHT A LESSON!
CERA KNOWS HER MISTRESS WELL, AND TELLS HER WHAT SHE WANTS TO HEAR...
SHE IS NOT WORTHY OF SUCH HAPPINESS, JOYA! ONLY YOU, DAUGHTER OF JUPITER, DESERVE THE LOVE OF A MORTAL! YOU SHOULD BE IN HER PLACE!
HOW RIGHT YOU ARE! HMMM... THIS MORTAL IS QUITE HANDSOME! CERA, VENUS HAS TARRIED TOO LONG ON EARTH! I SHALL PUT A STOP TO IT AT ONCE!
IN HIS PRIVATE CHAMBERS JUPITER IS SEEKING A RARE PLEASURE, REST FROM HIS DIFFICULT DUTIES AS KING OF ALL THE GODS OF OLYMPUS!
SIRE, THE PRINCESS JOYA DESIRES AUDIENCE WITH YOU!
NO! NOT THAT ONE! SHE IS FOREVER PLAGUING ME AND PRESSING ME WITH HER SCHEMES AND WHIMS! I WON'T SEE HER! TELL HER I'VE GONE FOR A DRIVE WITH APOLLO!
ONE SIDE, KNAVE! AH! MY WORTHY FATHER AND KING! DOES NOT YOUR HEART BEAT MADLY WITH HAPPINESS TO BEHOLD ME?
OOOOH! MY ACHING HEAD! GO AWAY, JOYA, PLEASE! HAVE PITY ON AN OLD MAN! THE SIGHT OF YOU MEANS ONLY ONE THING... ***TROUBLE!***
FOR SHAME, FATHER! THAT IS NO WAY TO SPEAK TO YOUR LOVING CHILD! ESPECIALLY WHEN I BRING NEWS THAT WILL CURL YOUR BEARD!
I THOUGHT SO! SPEAK, THEN... AND GO! AND I HOPE THAT YOU DON'T VISIT ME FOR ANOTHER THOUSAND YEARS!
LISTEN, SIRE, AND CAREFULLY! VENUS IS A TRAITOR TO THE GODS!
WHAT? JOYA, MIND THAT WICKED TONGUE OF YOURS! THAT IS A SERIOUS CHARGE TO BRING AGAINST THE GODDESS OF LOVE!


BAH! VENUS IS NO LONGER ONE OF US! SHE HAS BETRAYED HER DUTIES AS THE GODDESS OF LOVE! WITH MY OWN EARS I HEARD HER TELL HER EARTH-MAN SWEETHEART THAT HIS LOVE WAS ALL THAT MATTERED TO HER! WEL-L-L-L?
OF COURSE I DON'T DOUBT YOU, JOYA... BUT--DO YOU HAVE ANY PROOF OF THIS?
SPEAK, CERA!
I, TOO, HEARD THOSE WORDS, MAJESTY!
THEN MY DUTY IS CLEAR! IF TWO OF MY SUBJECTS BRING SUCH A CHARGE, SHE MUST BE TRIED BY THE GODS FOR TREASON! BUT IT BREAKS MY HEART TO HAVE TO DO THIS TO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF ALL THE IMMORTALS!
BUT WHEN THE SADDENED JUPITER CALLS IN HIS SWIFT MESSENGER, MERCURY, HE MEETS WITH AN OBSTACLE!
WHAT? YOU MUST BE JOKING, SIRE! YOU WANT ME TO RETURN VENUS TO OLYMPUS TO STAND TRIAL?
I WISH I WERE JOKING, MERCURY! BOTH JOYA AND CERA HEARD HER... GO GET HER... BRING HER HERE AT ONCE!
JUPITER'S ORDERS MUST BE OBEYED, SO MERCURY SPEEDS TOWARD THE EARTH ON HIS DREADED MISSION!
IT'S ONE OF JOYA'S TRICKS--SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN JEALOUS OF VENUS! BUT IT MUST BE DONE NO MATTER WHAT I THINK! SHE MUST STAND THE ORDEAL OF THE GODS!
MERE SECONDS HAVE PASSED SINCE JOYA FIRST OVERHEARD VENUS'S FATAL WORDS, AND MERCURY FINDS HER AND WHITNEY IN THE SAME SITUATION!
ALAS! IT WOULD BE A DREADFUL SHAME TO SEPARATE THOSE TWO! I CAN'T DO IT!
THERE IS A PRESENCE HERE! I DON'T SEE IT--BUT IT'S HERE!
HUH?
SUDDENLY VENUS AND WHITNEY FIND THEMSELVES WHIRLING IN A GREAT VOID! THE VOYAGE TO OLYMPUS HAS BEGUN!
I HAVE IT! I'LL TAKE **BOTH** OF THEM! **GO!**
HEY! WHAT GOES ON?
WHIT! THE GODS! THE GODS OF OLYMPUS! THEY ARE CALLING ME TO GO TO THEM! THEY... THEY ARE CALLING... **US!**


THE JOURNEY IS SWIFT! SOON WHITNEY IS AMAZED AT THE FANTASTIC SURROUNDINGS OF OLYMPUS! NEVER BEFORE HAS MORTAL MAN EXPERIENCED SUCH AN AWE-INSPIRING SIGHT AS THIS!
WOW! THIS IS SOMETHING! WHAT DID I EAT LAST NIGHT TO BRING ON THIS DREAM?
YOU'RE NOT DREAMING, MY DARLING! I WISH YOU WERE! WE ARE IN OLYMPUS, THE HOME OF THE GODS!
FOR SOME MYSTERIOUS REASON THEY'VE CALLED ME HERE... AND I DON'T LIKE IT!
OH, SURE, SURE! STILL TRYING TO CONVINCE ME THAT YOU REALLY ARE THE ANCIENT GREEK GODDESS, EH? OKAY, HONEY! I'LL GO ALONG WITH THE DREAM!
WHITNEY WILL NEVER BELIEVE THAT WHAT I SAY IS TRUE! BUT... PERHAPS IT'S JUST AS WELL! SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT THIS BODES EVIL FOR US... AND IF HE THINKS THIS IS JUST A DREAM, IT WILL BE EASIER FOR HIM TO FACE WHATEVER ORDEAL IS IN STORE FOR US!
VENUS, HOLDING TIGHTLY TO WHITNEY'S HAND AND STILL WONDERING WHY SHE HAS BEEN SUMMONED, WALKS TOWARD THE MASSIVE DOORS OF THE COUNCIL CHAMBER OF THE GODS!
ENTER, BEAUTIFUL GODDESS OF ETERNAL LOVE! THE GODS AWAIT YOU!
HMM... ISN'T THIS SOMETHING! I MUST SAY MY DREAMS ARE GETTING BETTER ALL THE TIME!
ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU'RE IN THEM, HONEY!
KEEP THINKING THAT, MY DARLING! LET THIS BE ONLY A DREAM TO YOU, FOR... LOOK!
THE HIGH COUNCIL OF THE GODS! GRIMLY THEY SIT IN JUDGMENT, THE FATE OF THE TWO LOVERS IN THEIR HANDS! NOT SINCE THE ANCIENT DAY WHEN LOKI, GOD OF EVIL, WAS BANISHED TO THE UNDERWORLD, HAS THERE BEEN AN ASSEMBLAGE SUCH AS THIS!
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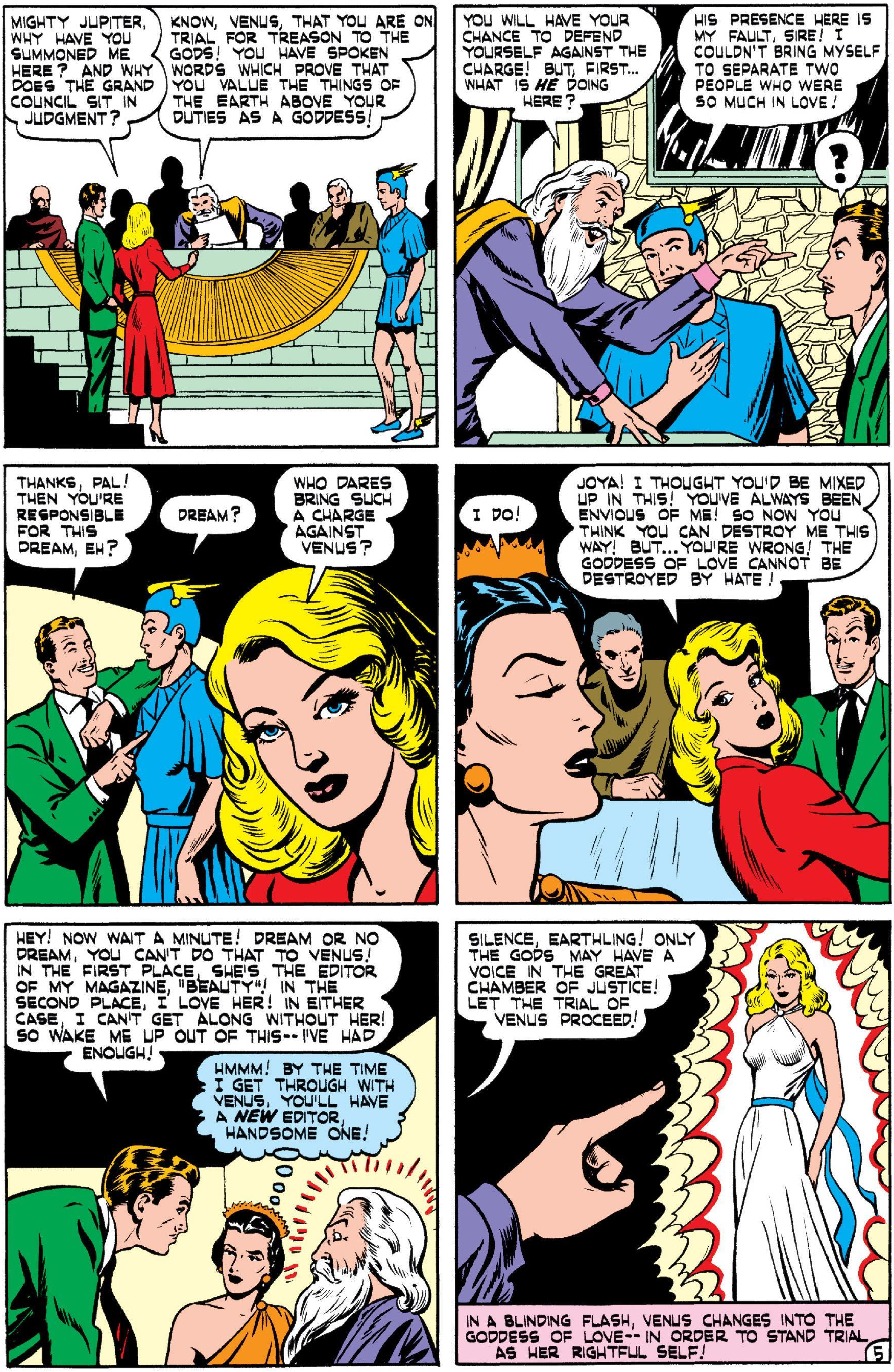
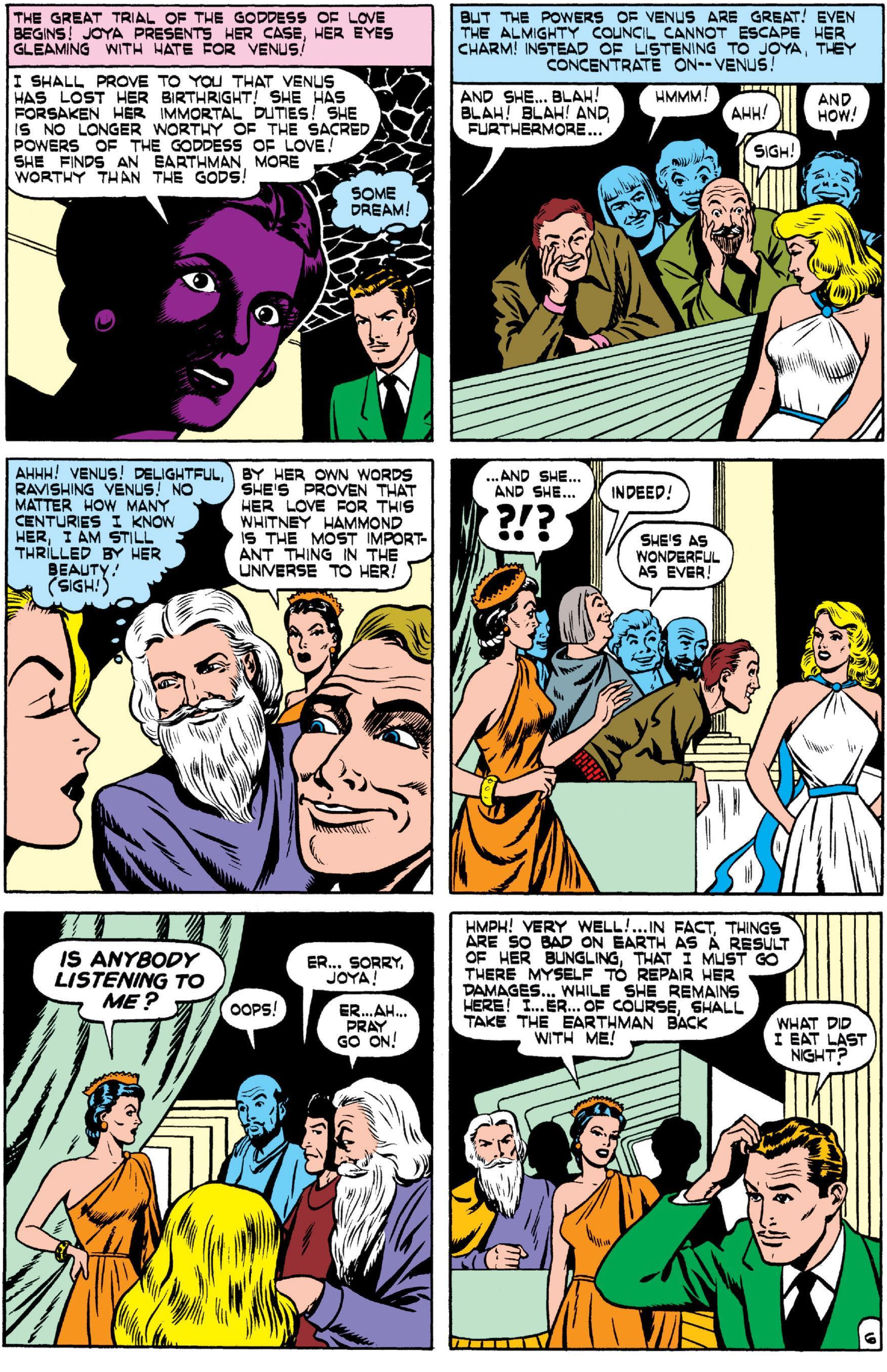
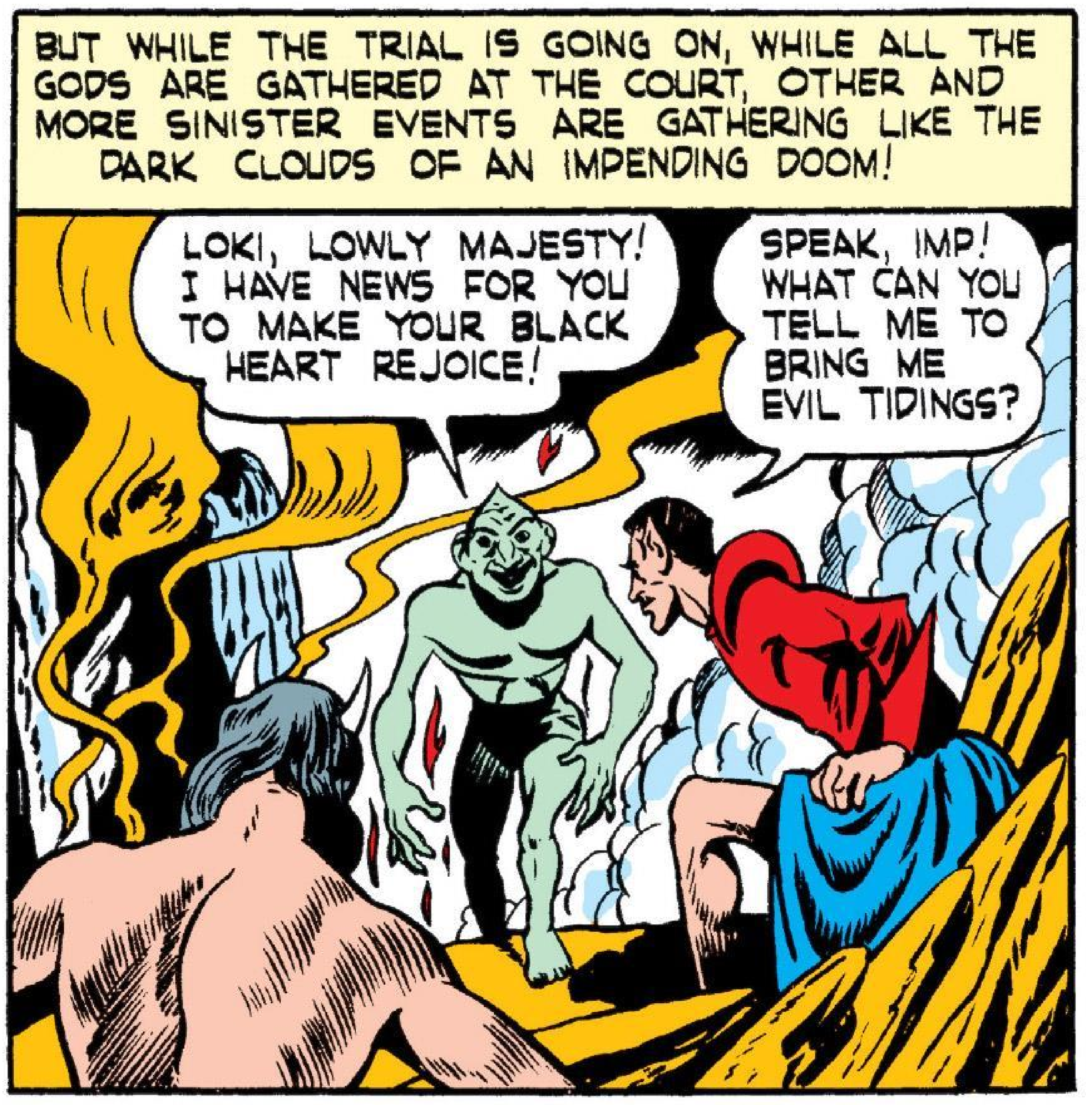
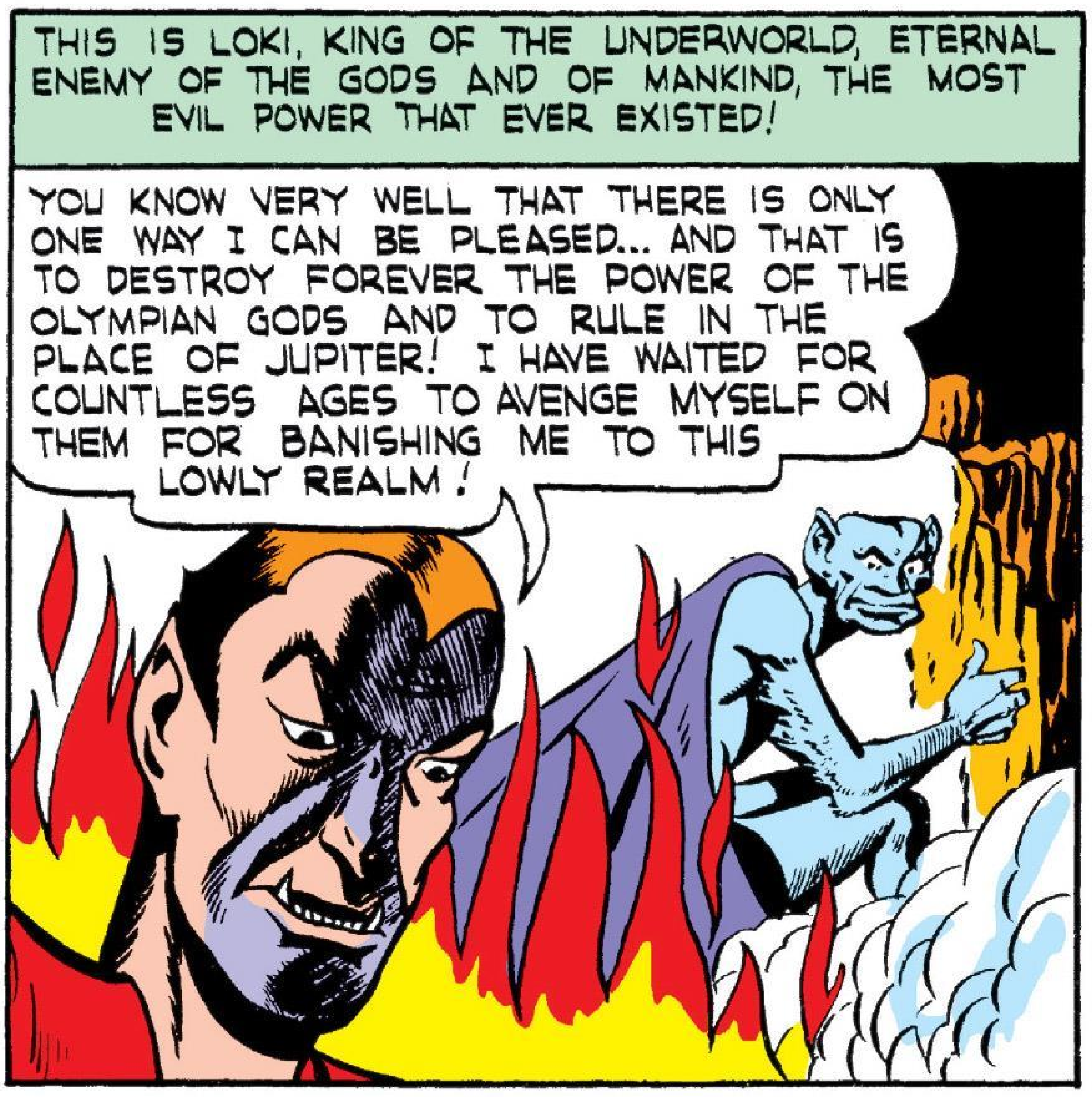
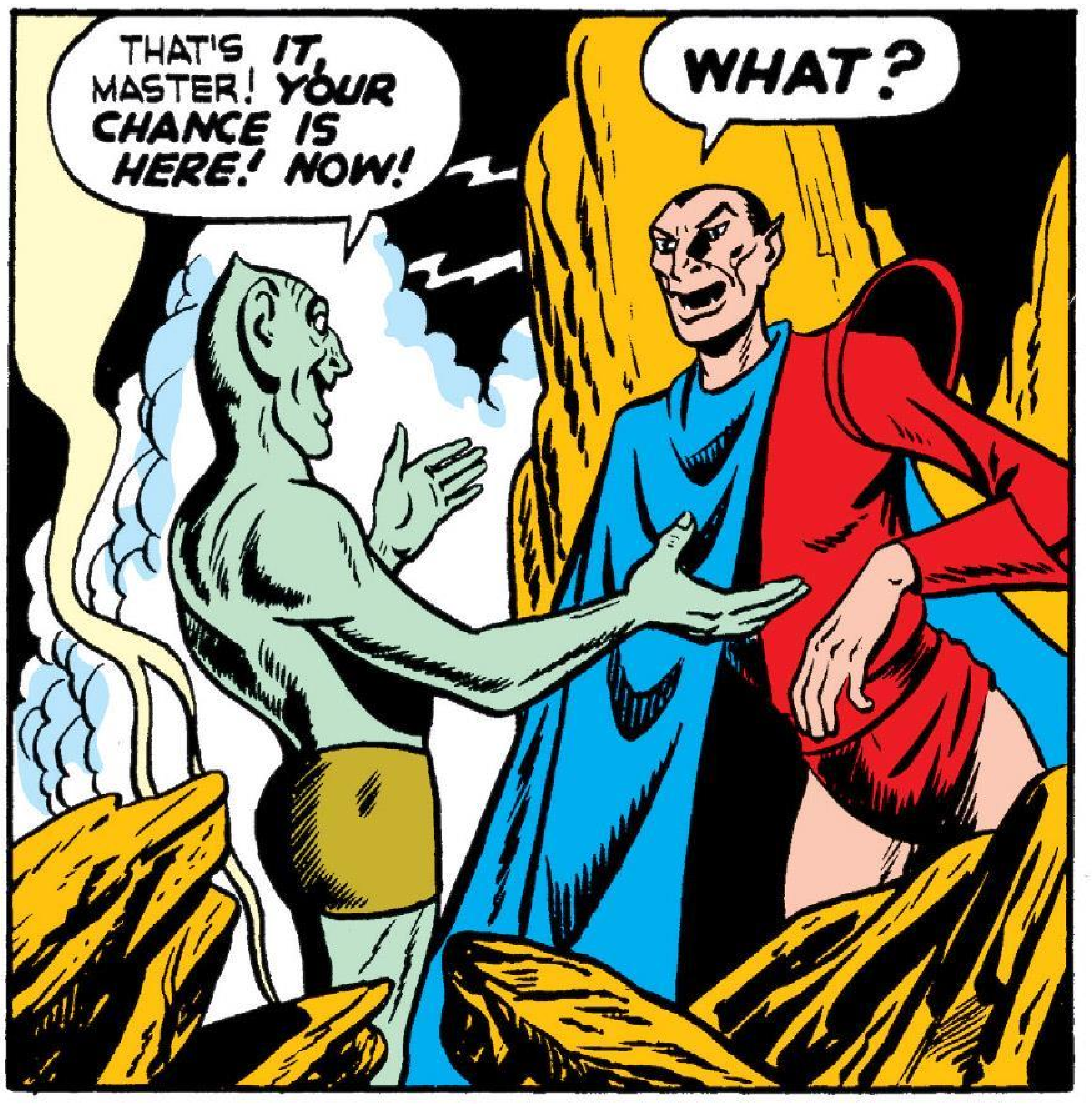
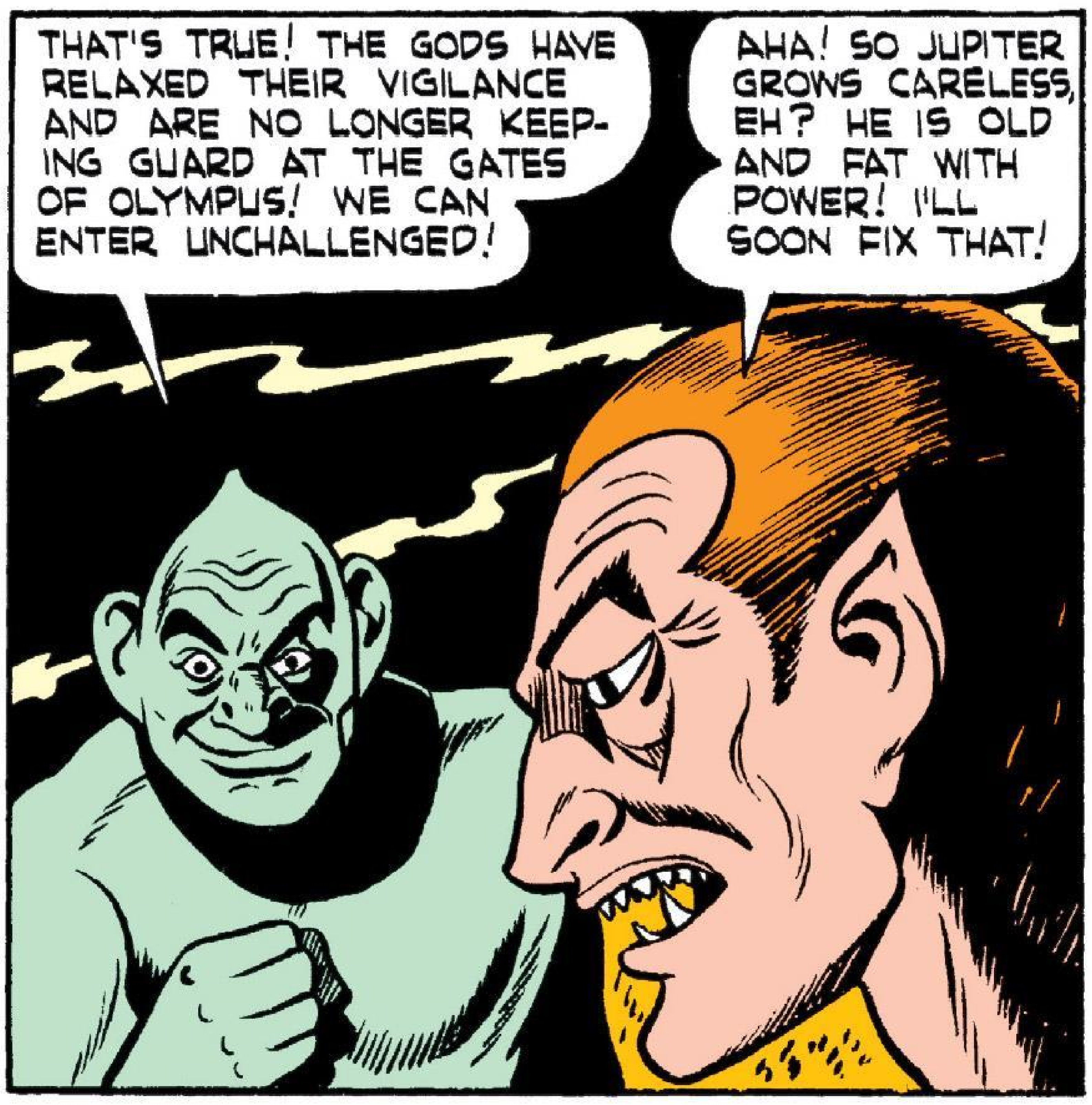

MIGHTY JUPITER, WHY HAVE YOU SUMMONED ME HERE? AND WHY DOES THE GRAND COUNCIL SIT IN JUDGMENT?
KNOW, VENUS, THAT YOU ARE ON TRIAL FOR TREASON TO THE GODS! YOU HAVE SPOKEN WORDS WHICH PROVE THAT YOU VALUE THE THINGS OF THE EARTH ABOVE YOUR DUTIES AS A GODDESS!
YOU WILL HAVE YOUR CHANCE TO DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST THE CHARGE! BUT, FIRST... WHAT IS ***HE*** DOING HERE?
HIS PRESENCE HERE IS MY FAULT, SIRE! I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO SEPARATE TWO PEOPLE WHO WERE SO MUCH IN LOVE!
?
THANKS, PAL! THEN YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS DREAM, EH?
DREAM?
WHO DARES BRING SUCH A CHARGE AGAINST VENUS?
I DO!
JOYA! I THOUGHT YOU'D BE MIXED UP IN THIS! YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN ENVIOUS OF ME! SO NOW YOU THINK YOU CAN DESTROY ME THIS WAY! BUT... YOU'RE WRONG! THE GODDESS OF LOVE CANNOT BE DESTROYED BY HATE!
HEY! NOW WAIT A MINUTE! DREAM OR NO DREAM, YOU CAN'T DO THAT TO VENUS! IN THE FIRST PLACE, SHE'S THE EDITOR OF MY MAGAZINE, "BEAUTY"! IN THE SECOND PLACE, I LOVE HER! IN EITHER CASE, I CAN'T GET ALONG WITHOUT HER! SO WAKE ME UP OUT OF THIS-- I'VE HAD ENOUGH!
HMMM! BY THE TIME I GET THROUGH WITH VENUS, YOU'LL HAVE A ***NEW*** EDITOR, HANDSOME ONE!
SILENCE, EARTHLING! ONLY THE GODS MAY HAVE A VOICE IN THE GREAT CHAMBER OF JUSTICE! LET THE TRIAL OF VENUS PROCEED!
IN A BLINDING FLASH, VENUS CHANGES INTO THE GODDESS OF LOVE-- IN ORDER TO STAND TRIAL AS HER RIGHTFUL SELF!

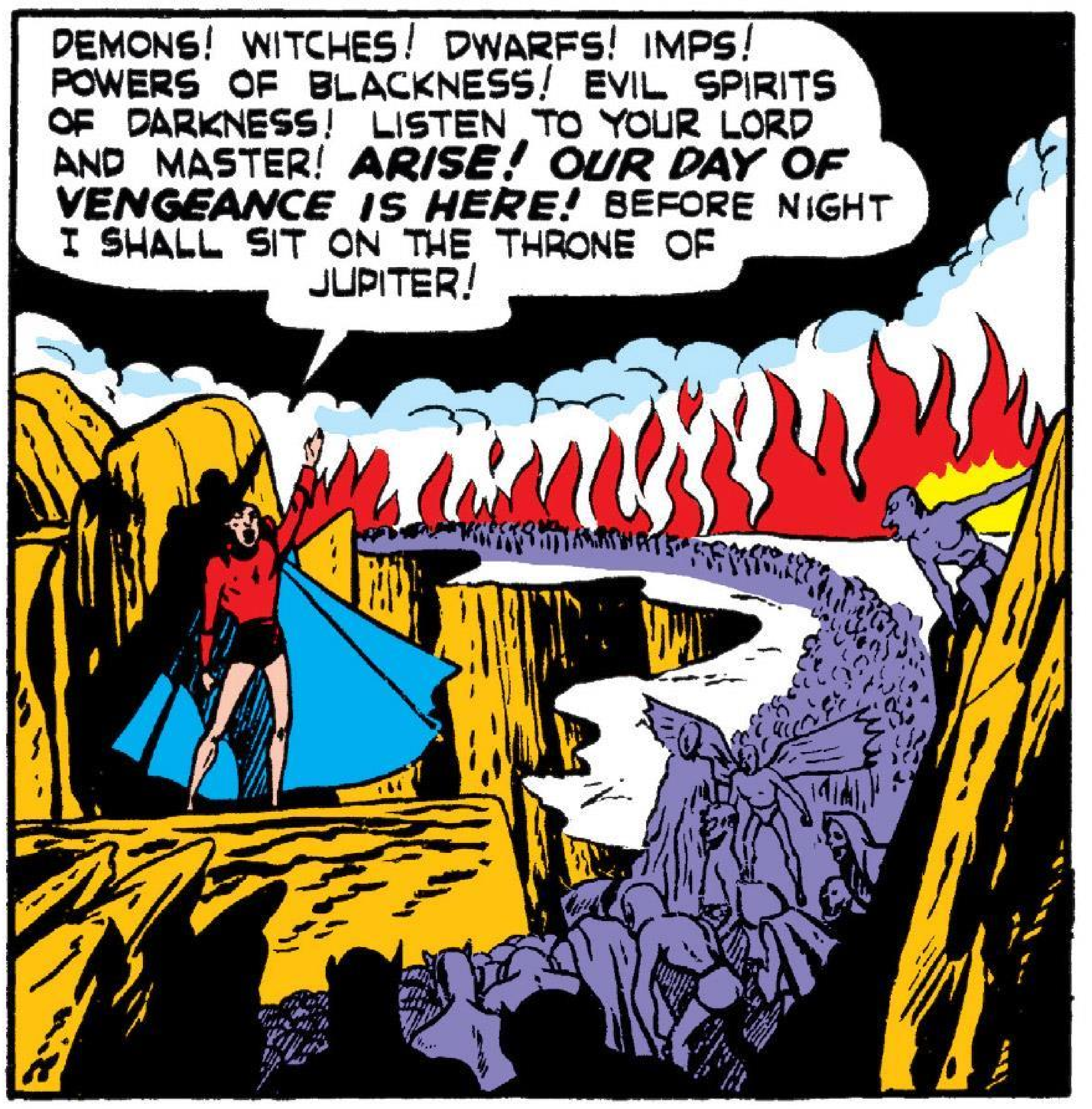

THE GREAT TRIAL OF THE GODDESS OF LOVE BEGINS! JOYA PRESENTS HER CASE, HER EYES GLEAMING WITH HATE FOR VENUS!
I SHALL PROVE TO YOU THAT VENUS HAS LOST HER BIRTHRIGHT! SHE HAS FORSAKEN HER IMMORTAL DUTIES! SHE IS NO LONGER WORTHY OF THE SACRED POWERS OF THE GODDESS OF LOVE! SHE FINDS AN EARTHMAN MORE WORTHY THAN THE GODS!
SOME DREAM!
BUT THE POWERS OF VENUS ARE GREAT! EVEN THE ALMIGHTY COUNCIL CANNOT ESCAPE HER CHARM! INSTEAD OF LISTENING TO JOYA, THEY CONCENTRATE ON--VENUS!
AND SHE... BLAH! BLAH! BLAH! AND, FURTHERMORE...
HMMM!
AHH!
SIGH!
AND HOW!
AHHH! VENUS! DELIGHTFUL, RAVISHING VENUS! NO MATTER HOW MANY CENTURIES I KNOW HER, I AM STILL THRILLED BY HER BEAUTY! (SIGH!)
BY HER OWN WORDS SHE'S PROVEN THAT HER LOVE FOR THIS WHITNEY HAMMOND IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THE UNIVERSE TO HER!
...AND SHE... AND SHE... ?!?
INDEED!
SHE'S AS WONDERFUL AS EVER!
IS ANYBODY LISTENING TO ME?
OOPS!
ER... SORRY, JOYA!
ER...AH... PRAY GO ON!
HMPH! VERY WELL!...IN FACT, THINGS ARE SO BAD ON EARTH AS A RESULT OF HER BUNGLING, THAT I MUST GO THERE MYSELF TO REPAIR HER DAMAGES... WHILE SHE REMAINS HERE! I...ER... OF COURSE, SHALL TAKE THE EARTHMAN BACK WITH ME!
WHAT DID I EAT LAST NIGHT?

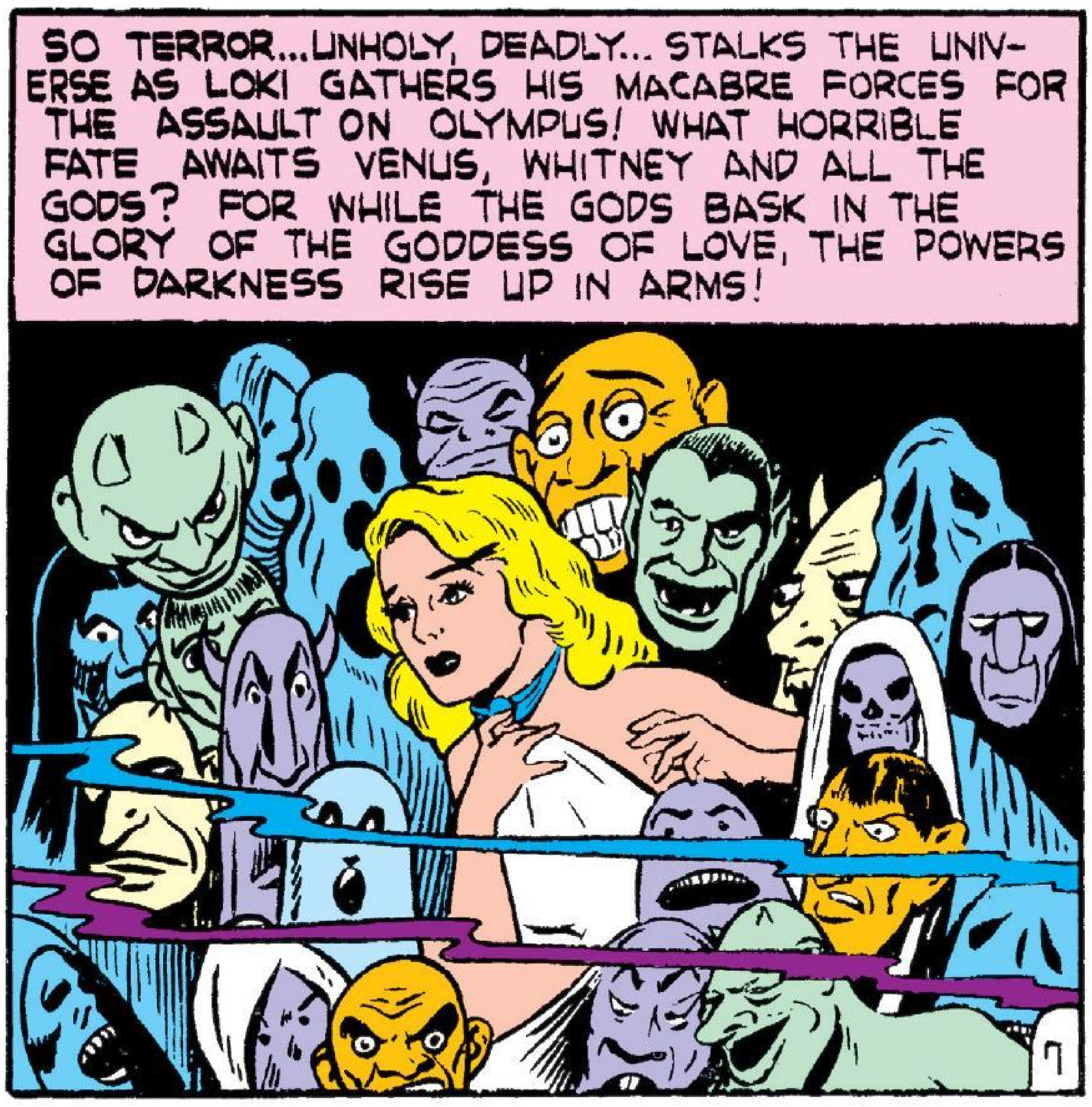

BUT WHILE THE TRIAL IS GOING ON, WHILE ALL THE GODS ARE GATHERED AT THE COURT, OTHER AND MORE SINISTER EVENTS ARE GATHERING LIKE THE DARK CLOUDS OF AN IMPENDING DOOM!
LOKI, LOWLY MAJESTY! I HAVE NEWS FOR YOU TO MAKE YOUR BLACK HEART REJOICE!
SPEAK, IMP! WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME TO BRING ME EVIL TIDINGS?

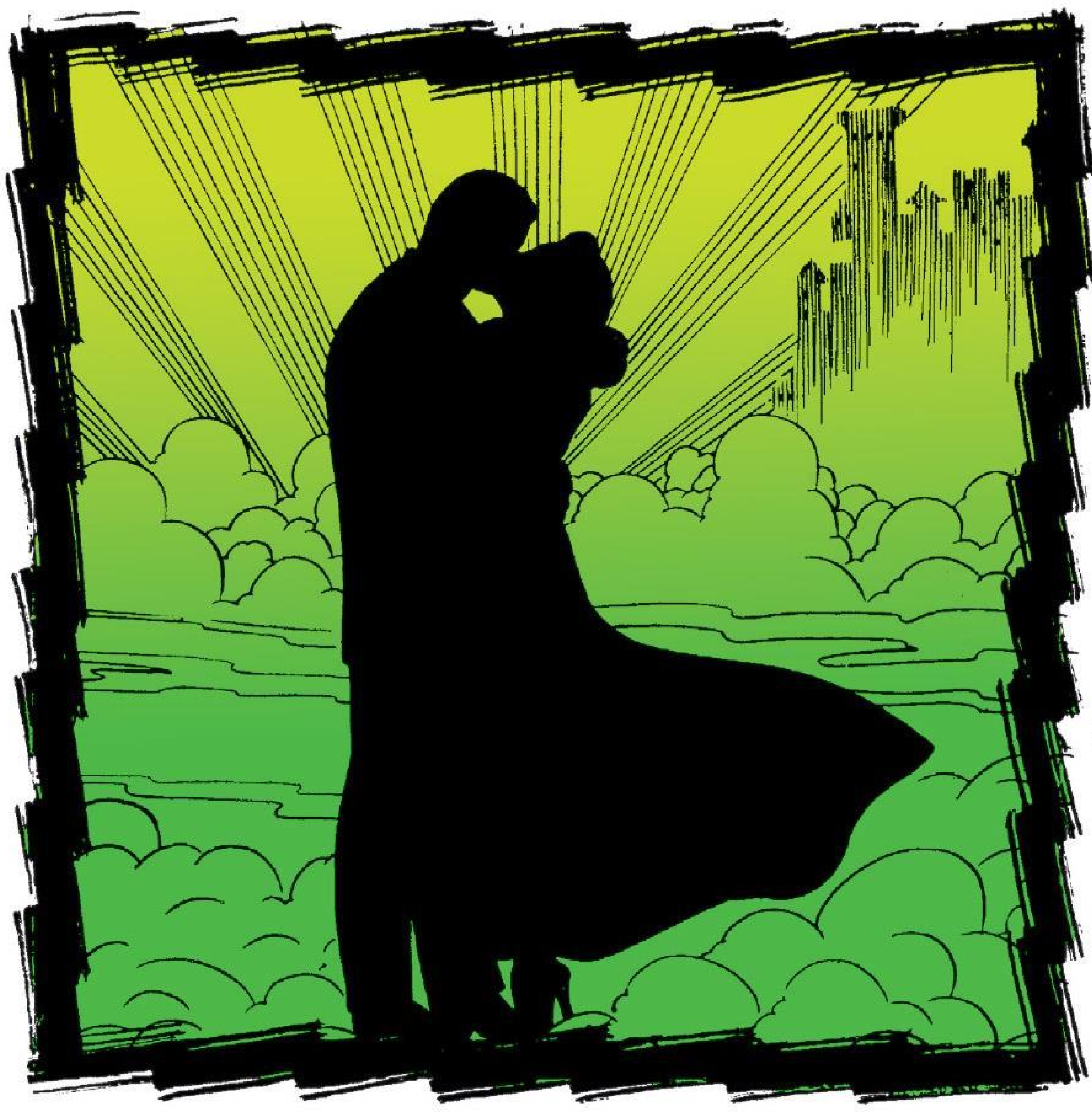

THIS IS LOKI, KING OF THE UNDERWORLD, ETERNAL ENEMY OF THE GODS AND OF MANKIND, THE MOST EVIL POWER THAT EVER EXISTED!
YOU KNOW VERY WELL THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY I CAN BE PLEASED... AND THAT IS TO DESTROY FOREVER THE POWER OF THE OLYMPIAN GODS AND TO RULE IN THE PLACE OF JUPITER! I HAVE WAITED FOR COUNTLESS AGES TO AVENGE MYSELF ON THEM FOR BANISHING ME TO THIS LOWLY REALM!


THAT'S *IT*, MASTER! ***YOUR CHANCE IS HERE! NOW!***
WHAT?


THAT'S TRUE! THE GODS HAVE RELAXED THEIR VIGILANCE AND ARE NO LONGER KEEPING GUARD AT THE GATES OF OLYMPUS! WE CAN ENTER UNCHALLENGED!
AHA! SO JUPITER GROWS CARELESS, EH? HE IS OLD AND FAT WITH POWER! I'LL SOON FIX THAT!


DEMONS! WITCHES! DWARFS! IMPS! POWERS OF BLACKNESS! EVIL SPIRITS OF DARKNESS! LISTEN TO YOUR LORD AND MASTER! ***ARISE! OUR DAY OF VENGEANCE IS HERE!*** BEFORE NIGHT I SHALL SIT ON THE THRONE OF JUPITER!

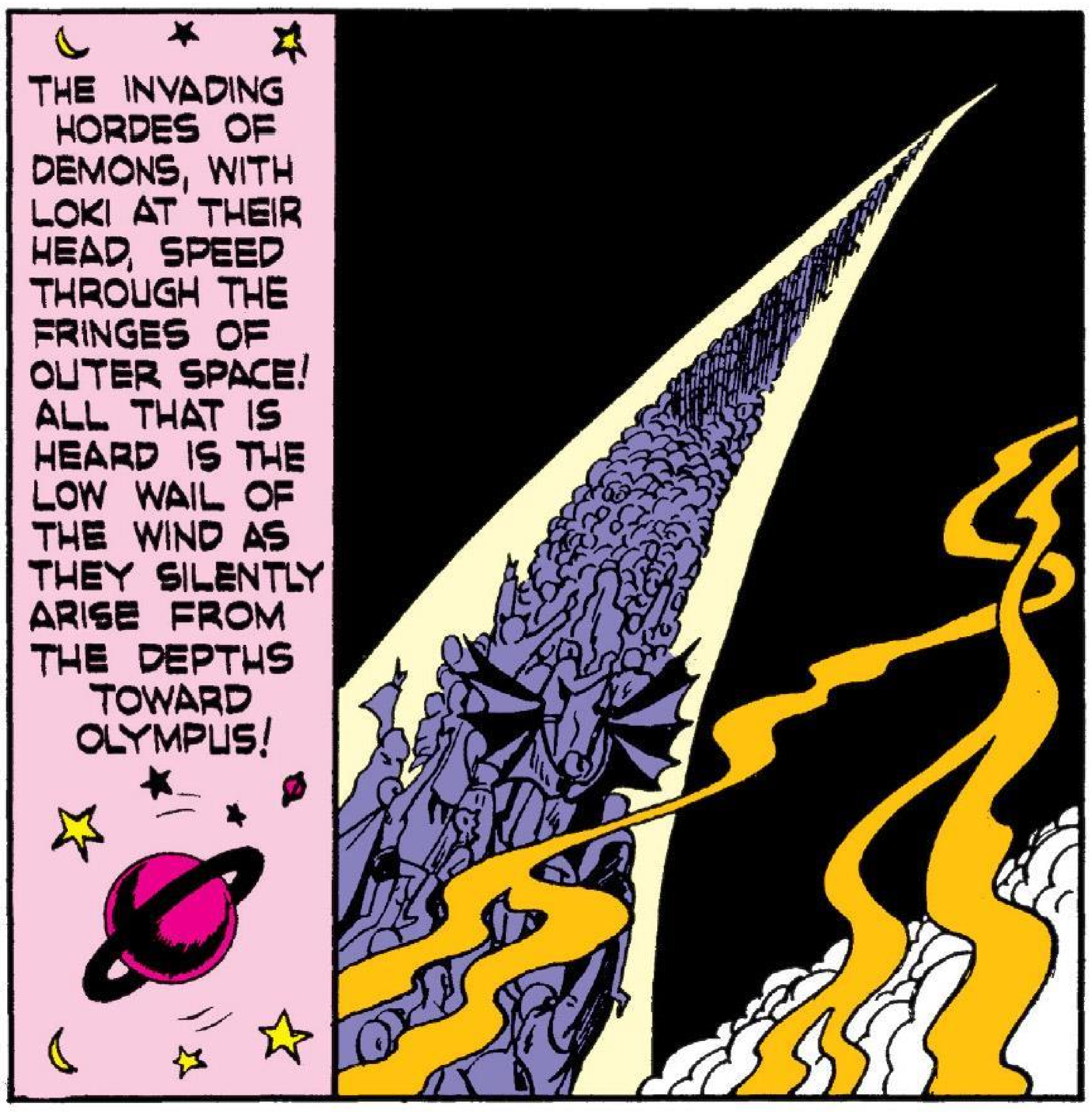

SO TERROR...UNHOLY, DEADLY... STALKS THE UNIVERSE AS LOKI GATHERS HIS MACABRE FORCES FOR THE ASSAULT ON OLYMPUS! WHAT HORRIBLE FATE AWAITS VENUS, WHITNEY AND ALL THE GODS? FOR WHILE THE GODS BASK IN THE GLORY OF THE GODDESS OF LOVE, THE POWERS OF DARKNESS RISE UP IN ARMS!

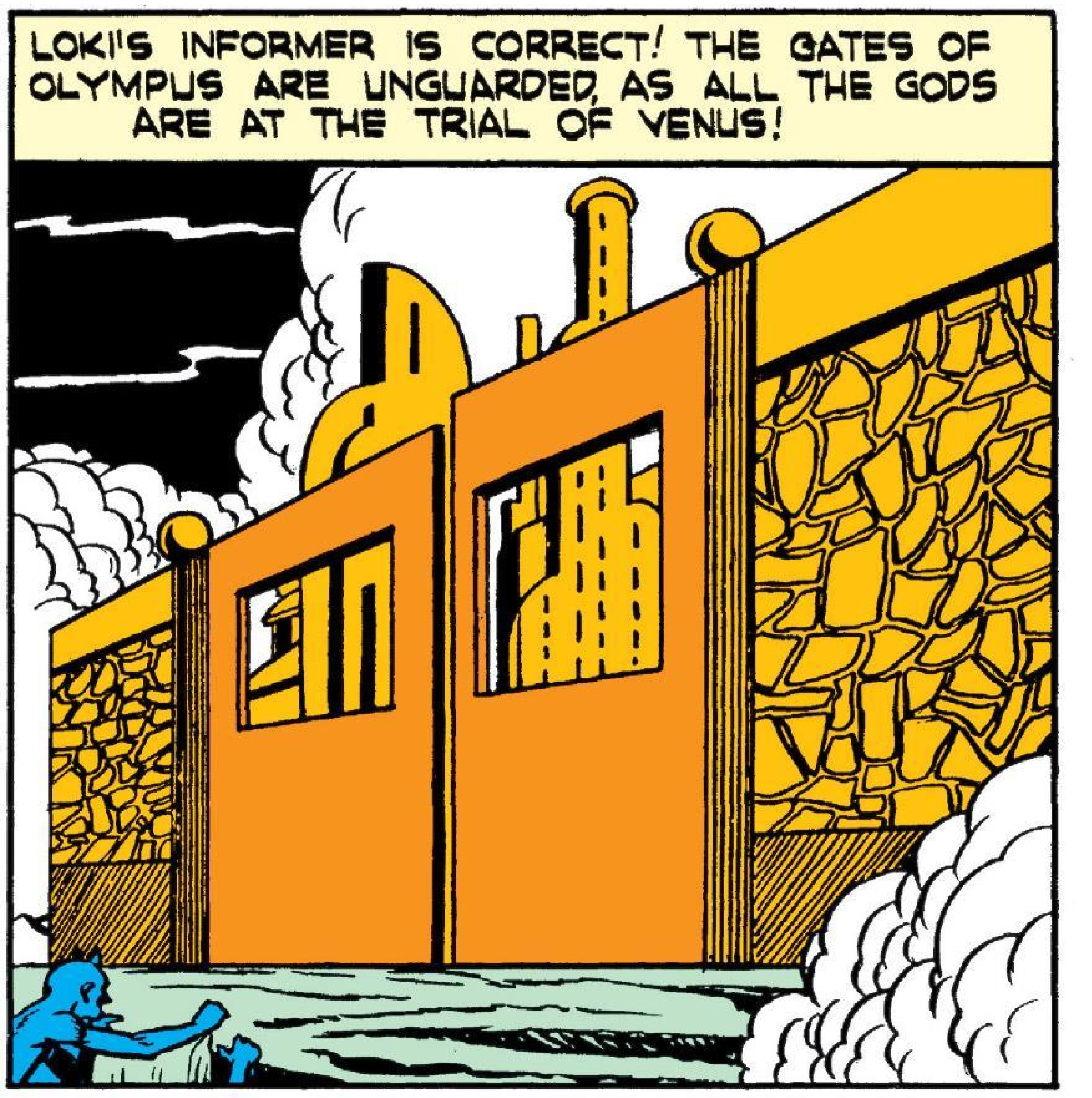


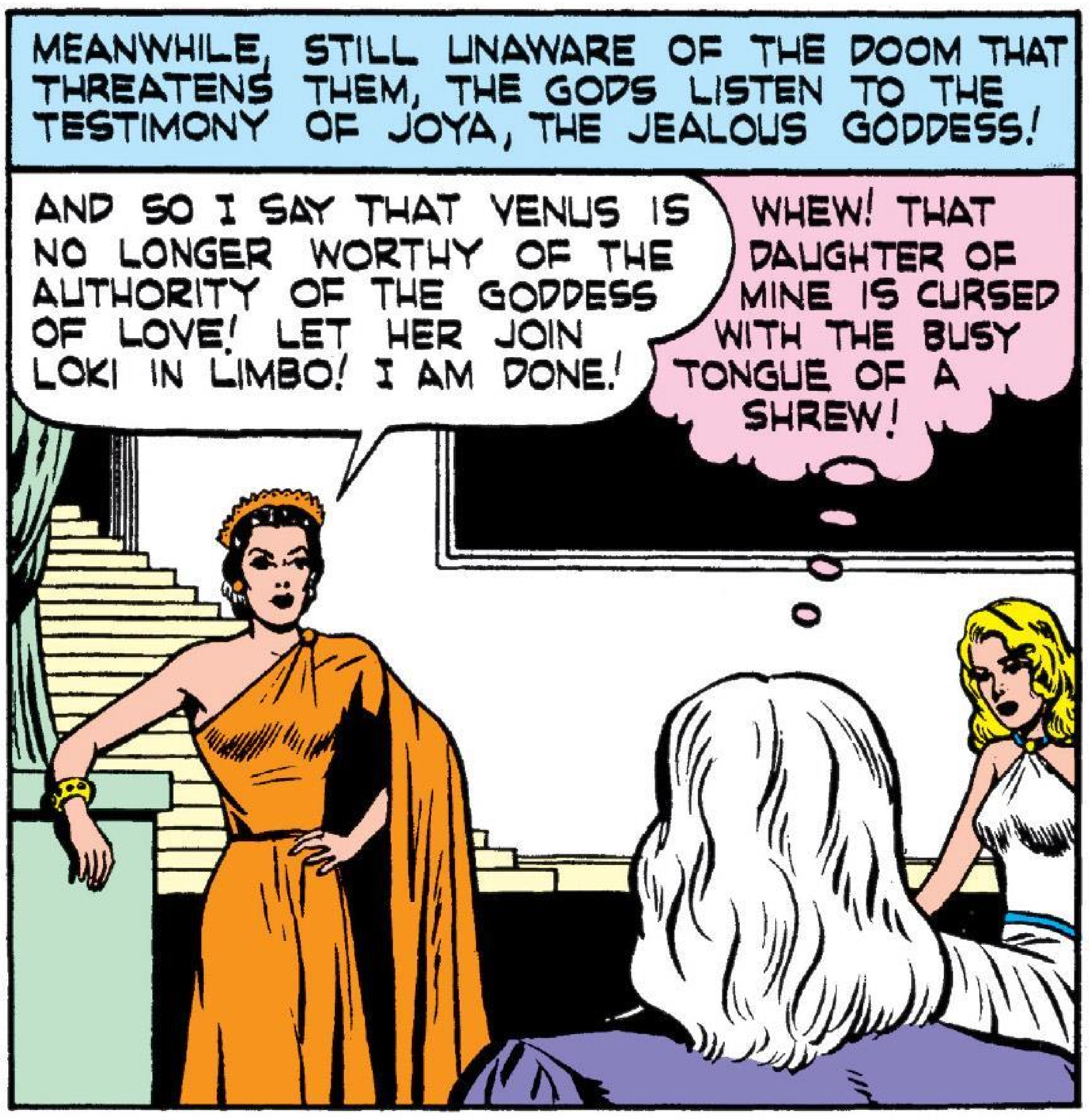
VENUS

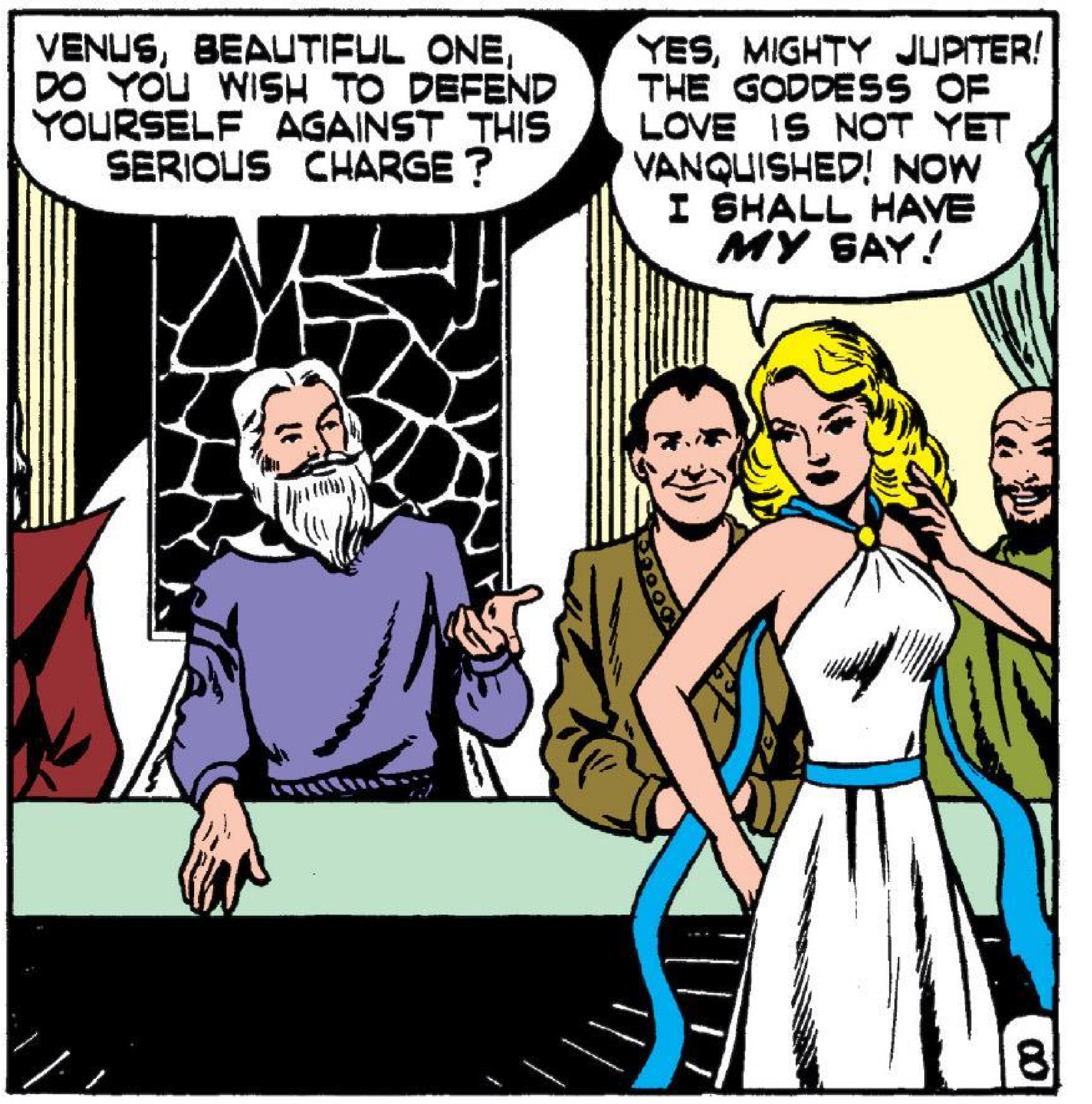
THE DREADFUL DECISION!

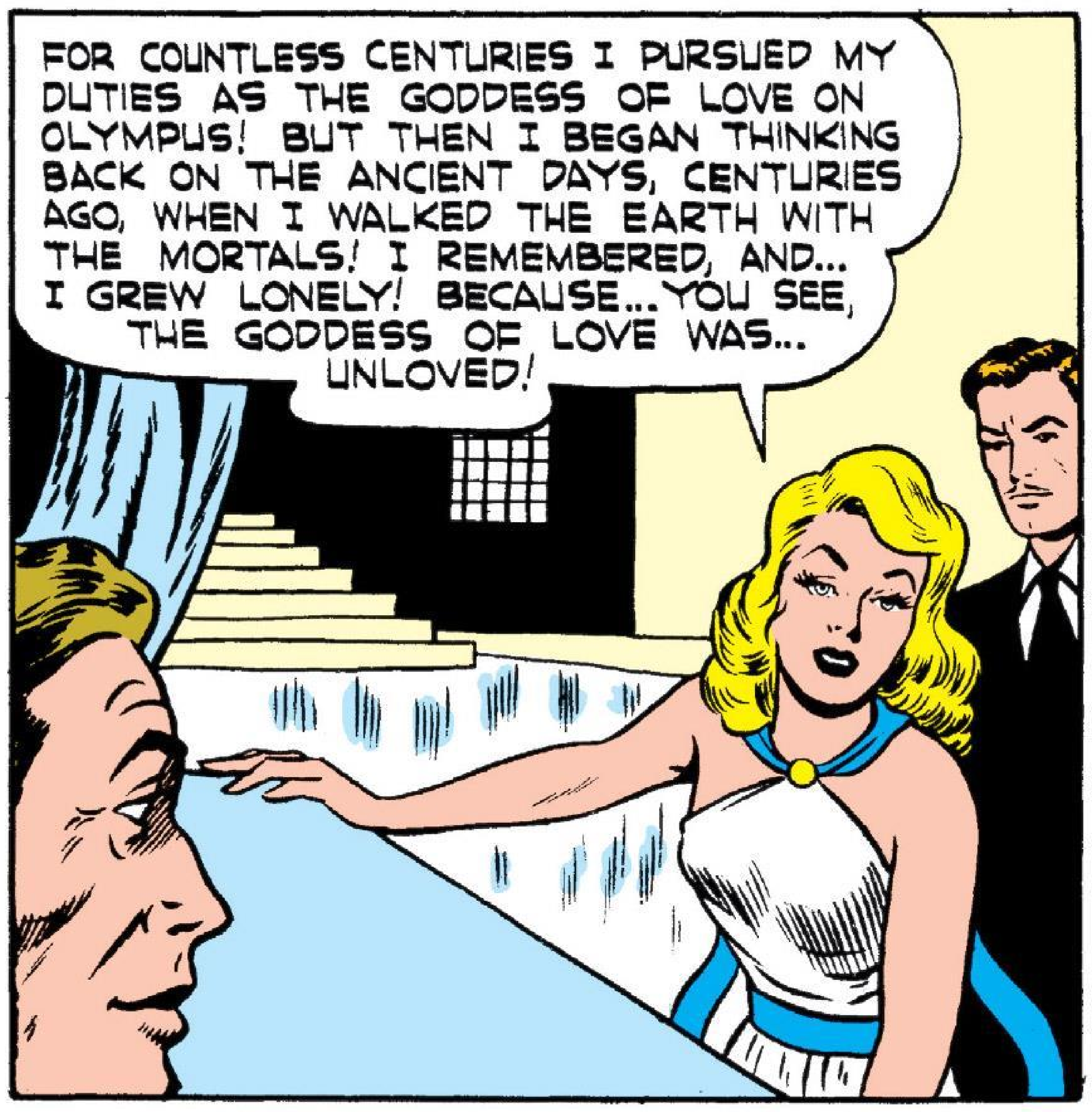
CHAPTER 2

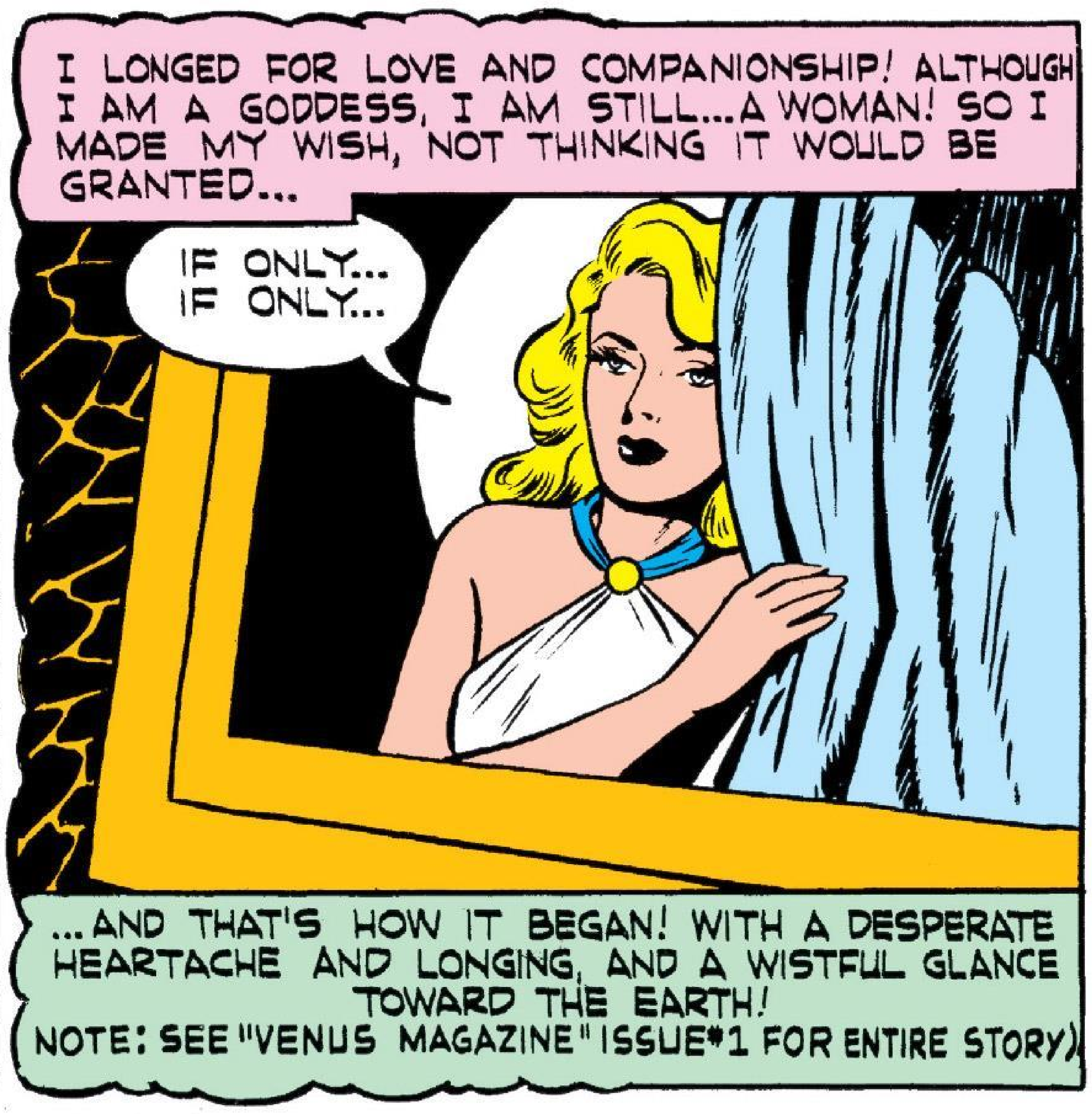

THE INVADING HORDES OF DEMONS, WITH LOKI AT THEIR HEAD, SPEED THROUGH THE FRINGES OF OUTER SPACE! ALL THAT IS HEARD IS THE LOW WAIL OF THE WIND AS THEY SILENTLY ARISE FROM THE DEPTHS TOWARD OLYMPUS!

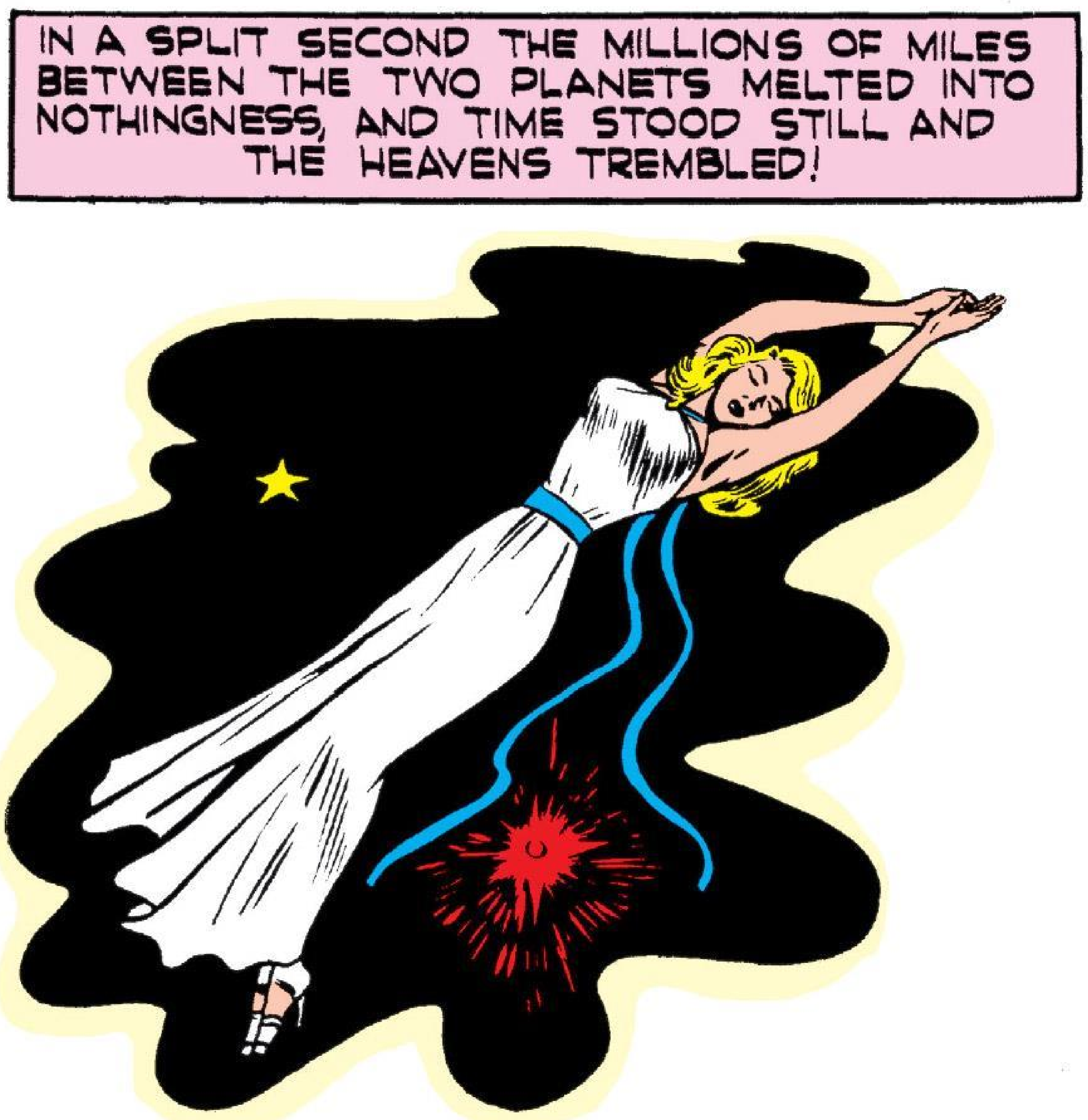

LOKI'S INFORMER IS CORRECT! THE GATES OF OLYMPUS ARE UNGUARDED, AS ALL THE GODS ARE AT THE TRIAL OF VENUS!

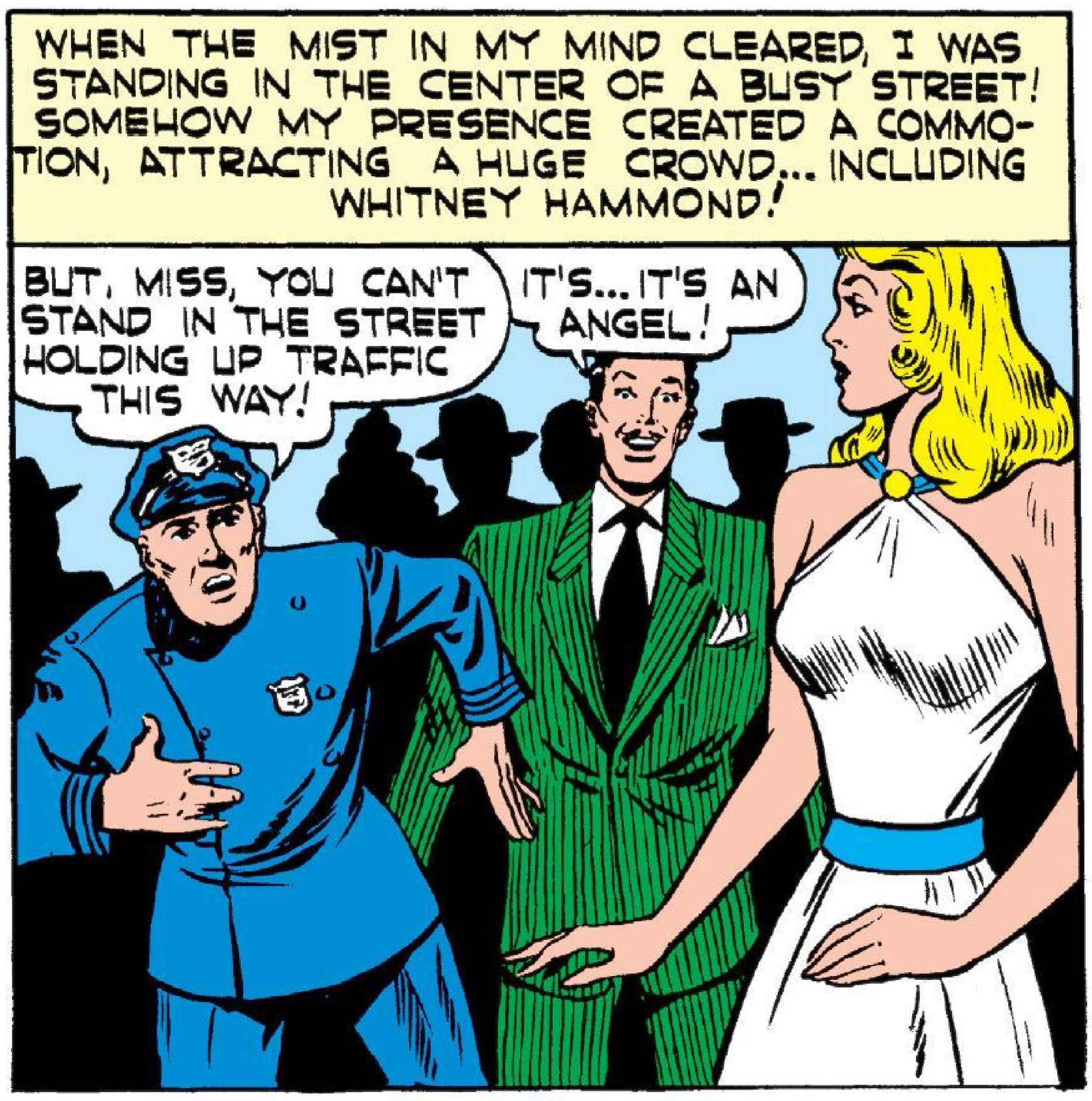

MEANWHILE, STILL UNAWARE OF THE DOOM THAT THREATENS THEM, THE GODS LISTEN TO THE TESTIMONY OF JOYA, THE JEALOUS GODDESS!
AND SO I SAY THAT VENUS IS NO LONGER WORTHY OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE GODDESS OF LOVE! LET HER JOIN LOKI IN LIMBO! I AM DONE!
WHEW! THAT DAUGHTER OF MINE IS CURSED WITH THE BUSY TONGUE OF A SHREW!

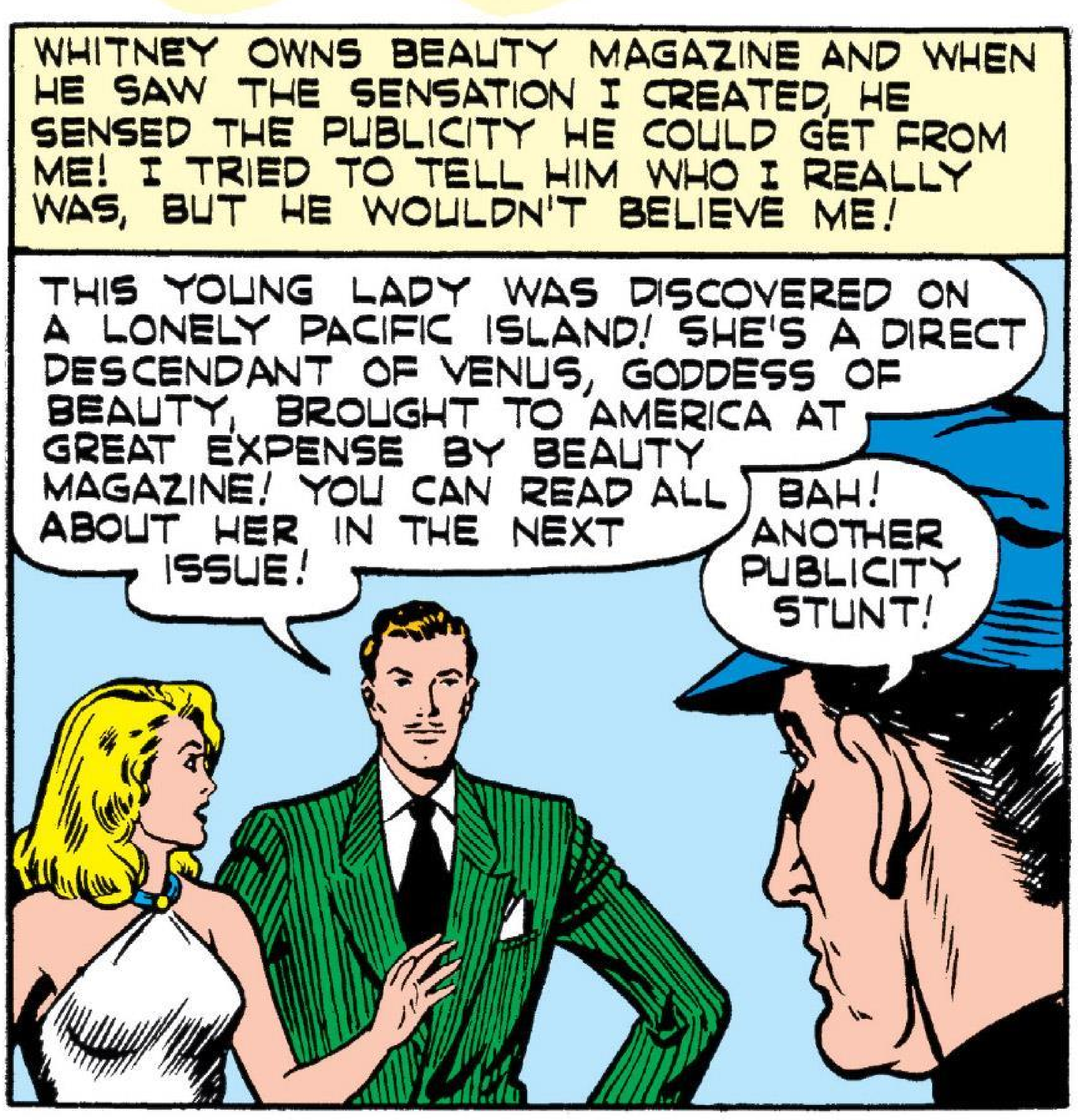

VENUS, BEAUTIFUL ONE, DO YOU WISH TO DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST THIS SERIOUS CHARGE?
YES, MIGHTY JUPITER! THE GODDESS OF LOVE IS NOT YET VANQUISHED! NOW I SHALL HAVE *MY* SAY!

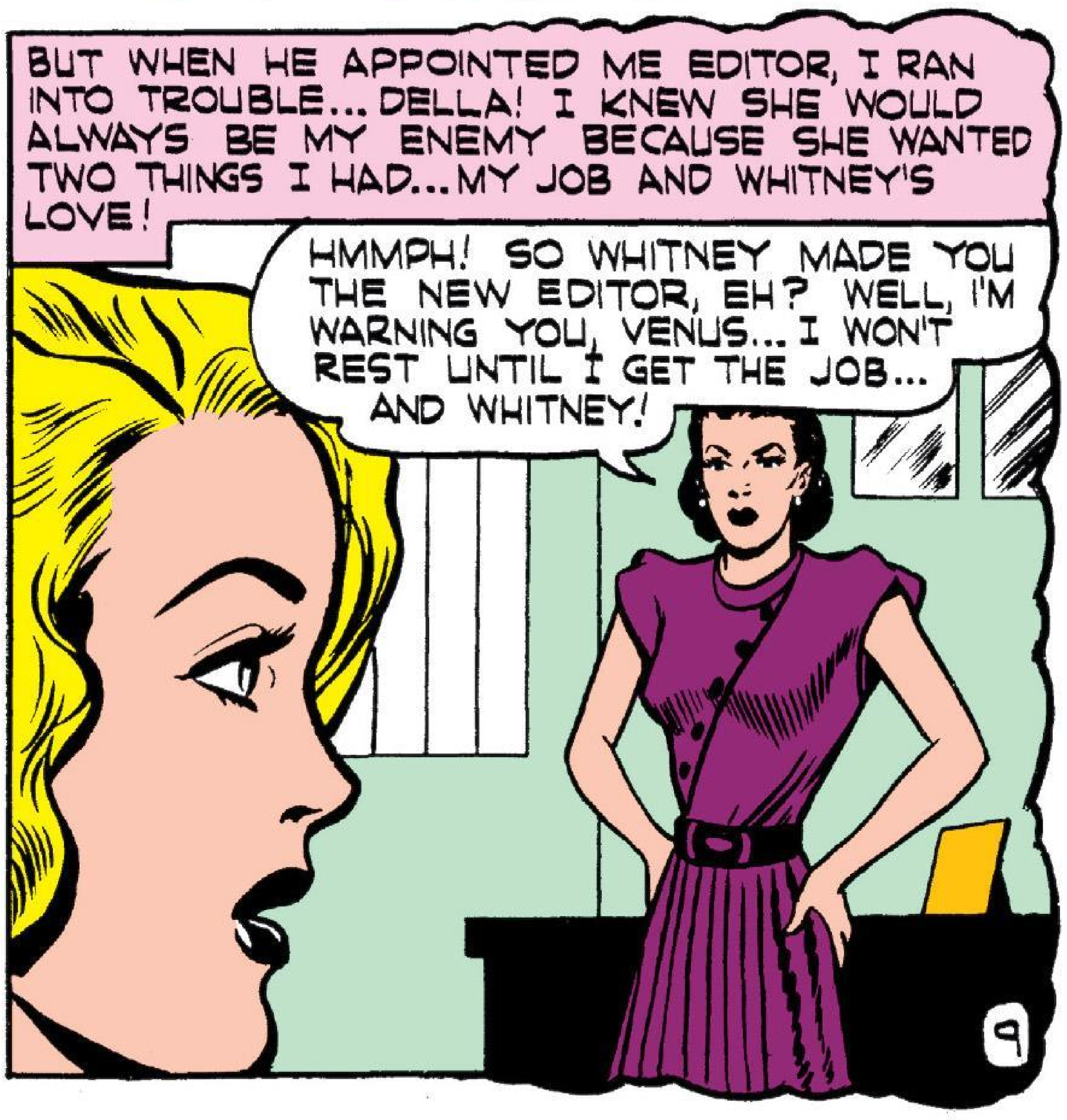

FOR COUNTLESS CENTURIES I PURSUED MY DUTIES AS THE GODDESS OF LOVE ON OLYMPUS! BUT THEN I BEGAN THINKING BACK ON THE ANCIENT DAYS, CENTURIES AGO, WHEN I WALKED THE EARTH WITH THE MORTALS! I REMEMBERED, AND... I GREW LONELY! BECAUSE...YOU SEE, THE GODDESS OF LOVE WAS... UNLOVED!

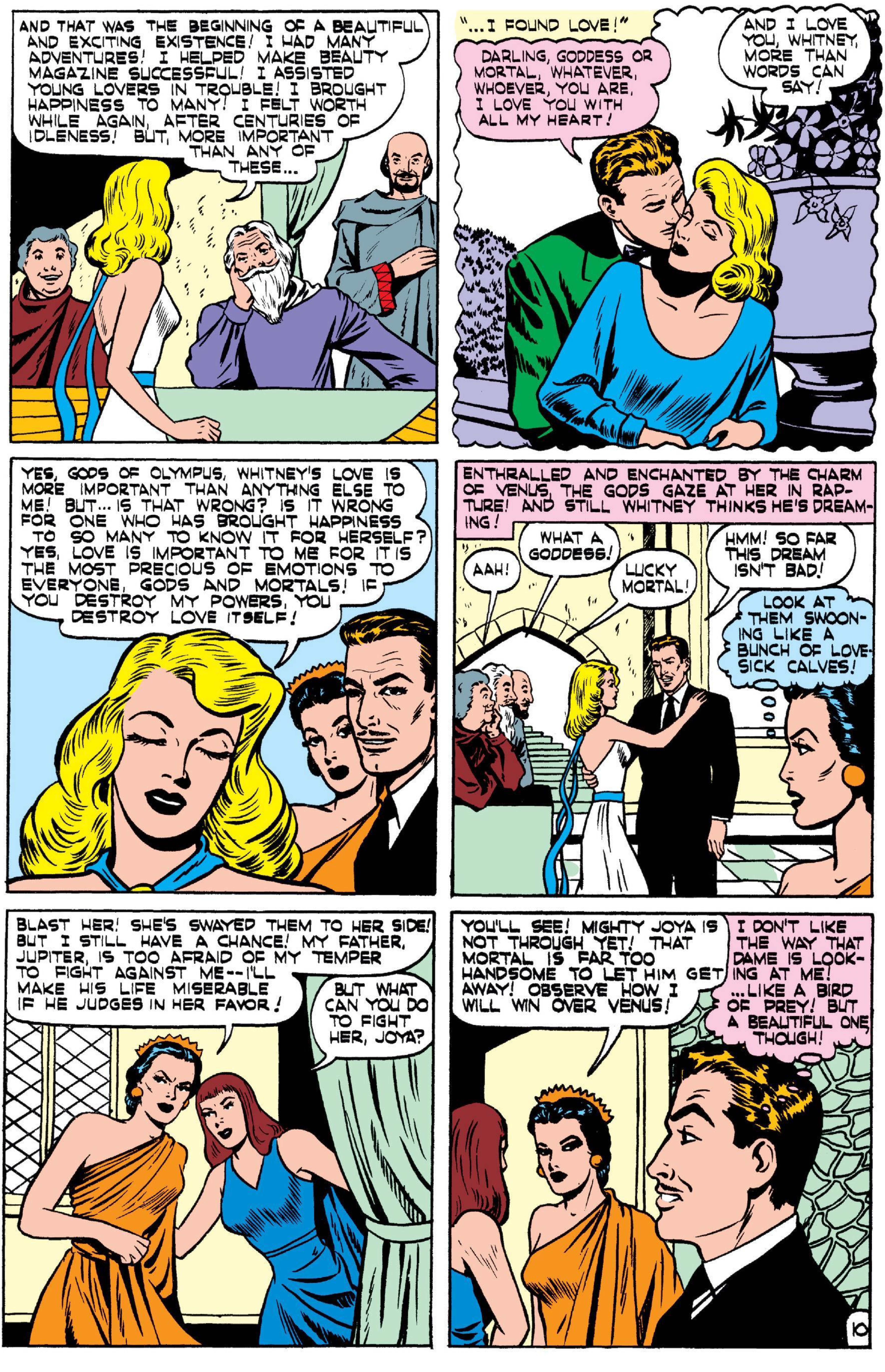

I LONGED FOR LOVE AND COMPANIONSHIP! ALTHOUGH I AM A GODDESS, I AM STILL...A WOMAN! SO I MADE MY WISH, NOT THINKING IT WOULD BE GRANTED...
IF ONLY... IF ONLY...
...AND THAT'S HOW IT BEGAN! WITH A DESPERATE HEARTACHE AND LONGING, AND A WISTFUL GLANCE TOWARD THE EARTH!
NOTE: SEE "VENUS MAGAZINE" ISSUE#1 FOR ENTIRE STORY)

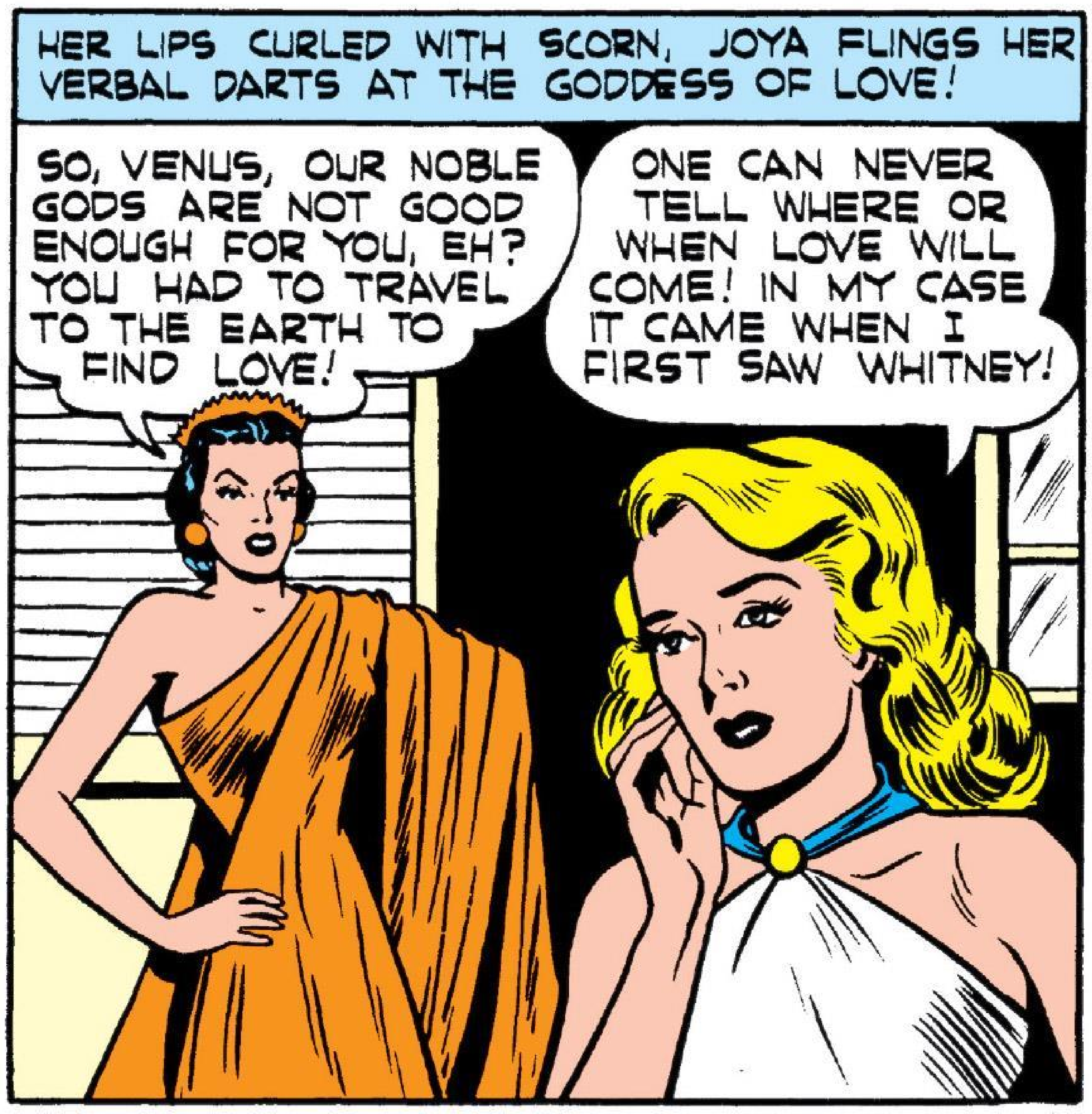

IN A SPLIT SECOND THE MILLIONS OF MILES BETWEEN THE TWO PLANETS MELTED INTO NOTHINGNESS, AND TIME STOOD STILL AND THE HEAVENS TREMBLED!

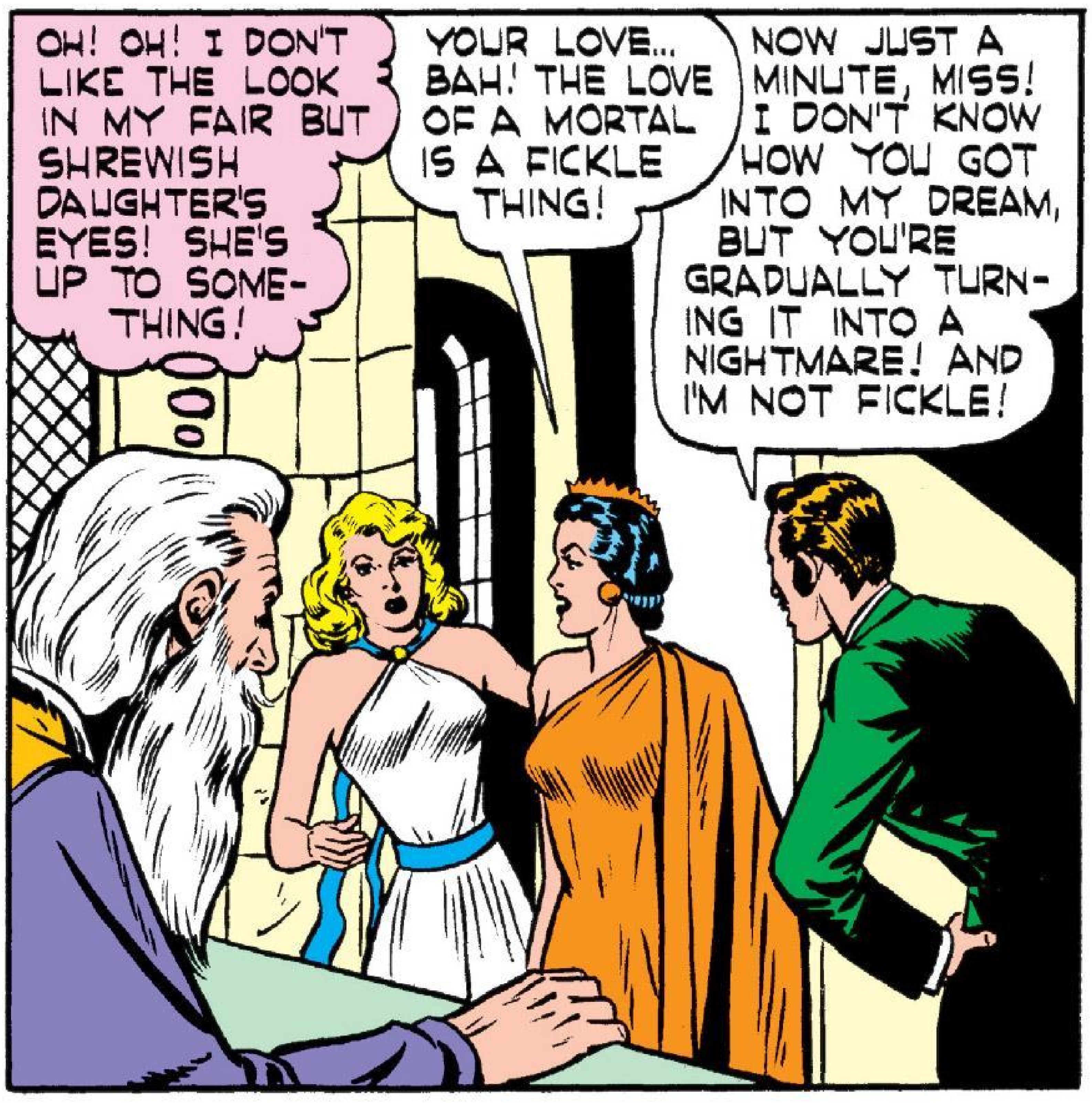

WHEN THE MIST IN MY MIND CLEARED, I WAS STANDING IN THE CENTER OF A BUSY STREET! SOMEHOW MY PRESENCE CREATED A COMMOTION, ATTRACTING A HUGE CROWD... INCLUDING WHITNEY HAMMOND!
BUT, MISS, YOU CAN'T STAND IN THE STREET HOLDING UP TRAFFIC THIS WAY!
IT'S...IT'S AN ANGEL!

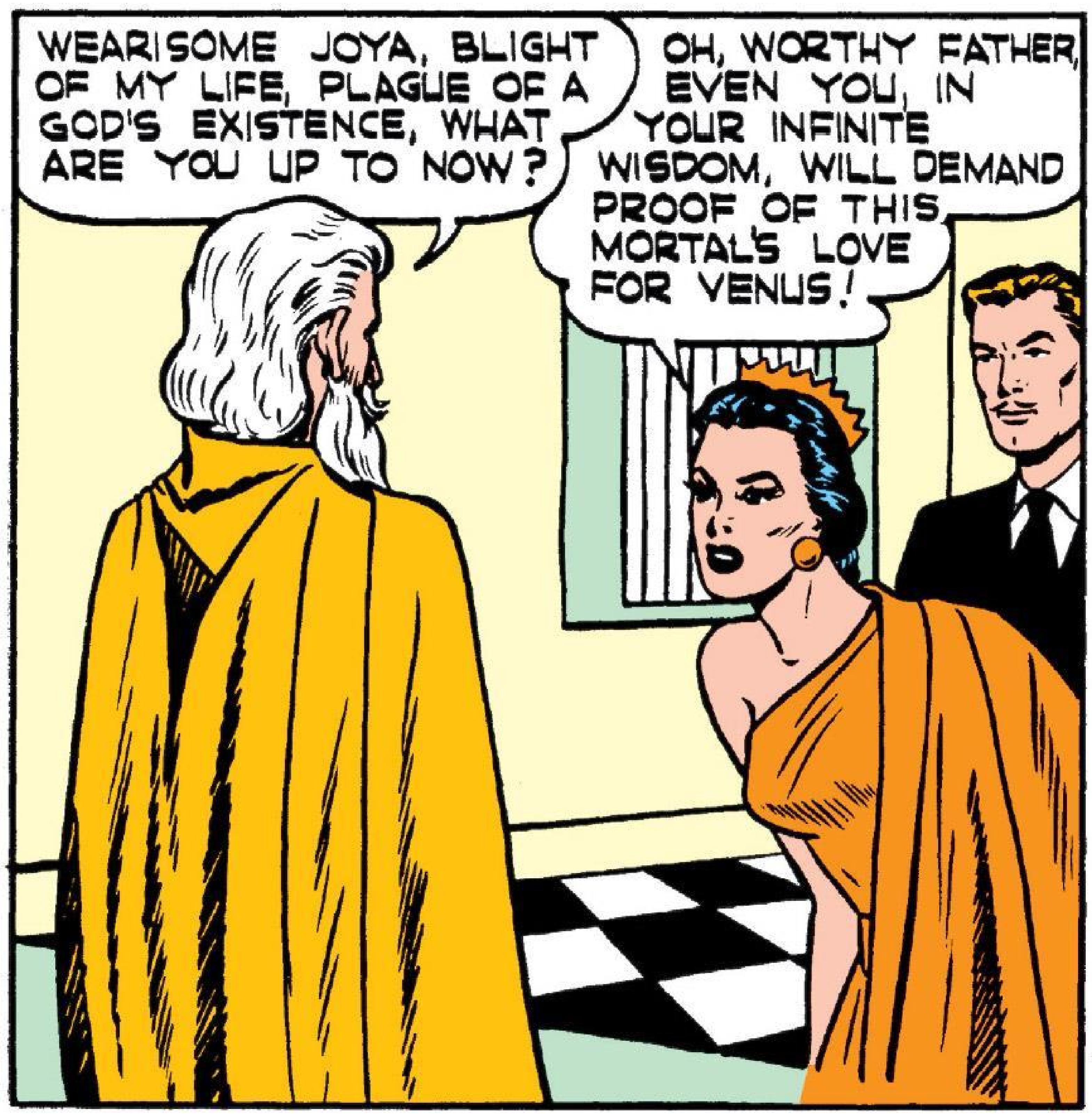

WHITNEY OWNS BEAUTY MAGAZINE AND WHEN HE SAW THE SENSATION I CREATED, HE SENSED THE PUBLICITY HE COULD GET FROM ME! I TRIED TO TELL HIM WHO I REALLY WAS, BUT HE WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME!
THIS YOUNG LADY WAS DISCOVERED ON A LONELY PACIFIC ISLAND! SHE'S A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF VENUS, GODDESS OF BEAUTY, BROUGHT TO AMERICA AT GREAT EXPENSE BY BEAUTY MAGAZINE! YOU CAN READ ALL ABOUT HER IN THE NEXT ISSUE!
BAH! ANOTHER PUBLICITY STUNT!

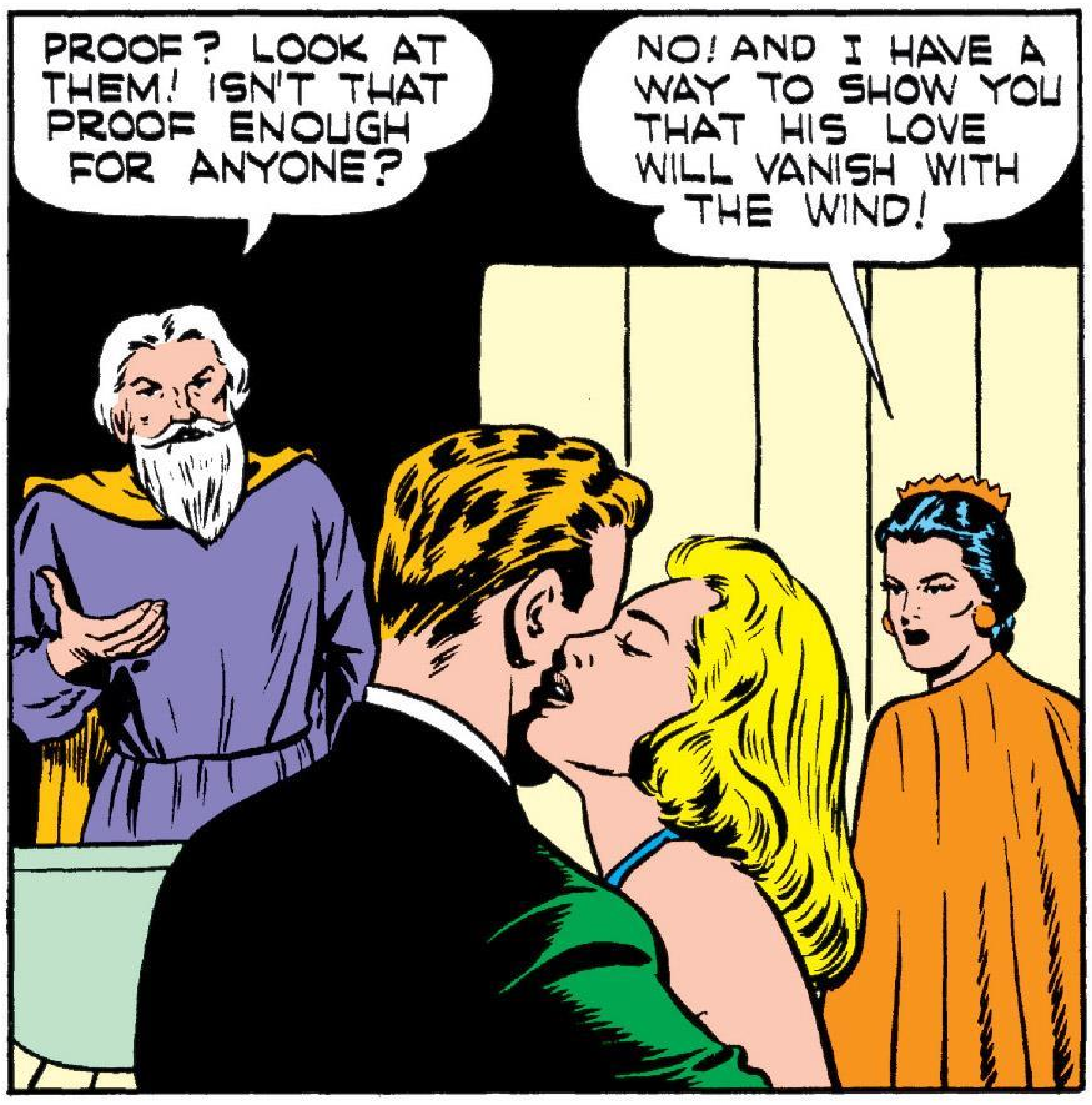

BUT WHEN HE APPOINTED ME EDITOR, I RAN INTO TROUBLE... DELLA! I KNEW SHE WOULD ALWAYS BE MY ENEMY BECAUSE SHE WANTED TWO THINGS I HAD... MY JOB AND WHITNEY'S LOVE!
HMMPH! SO WHITNEY MADE YOU THE NEW EDITOR, EH? WELL, I'M WARNING YOU, VENUS... I WON'T REST UNTIL I GET THE JOB... AND WHITNEY!

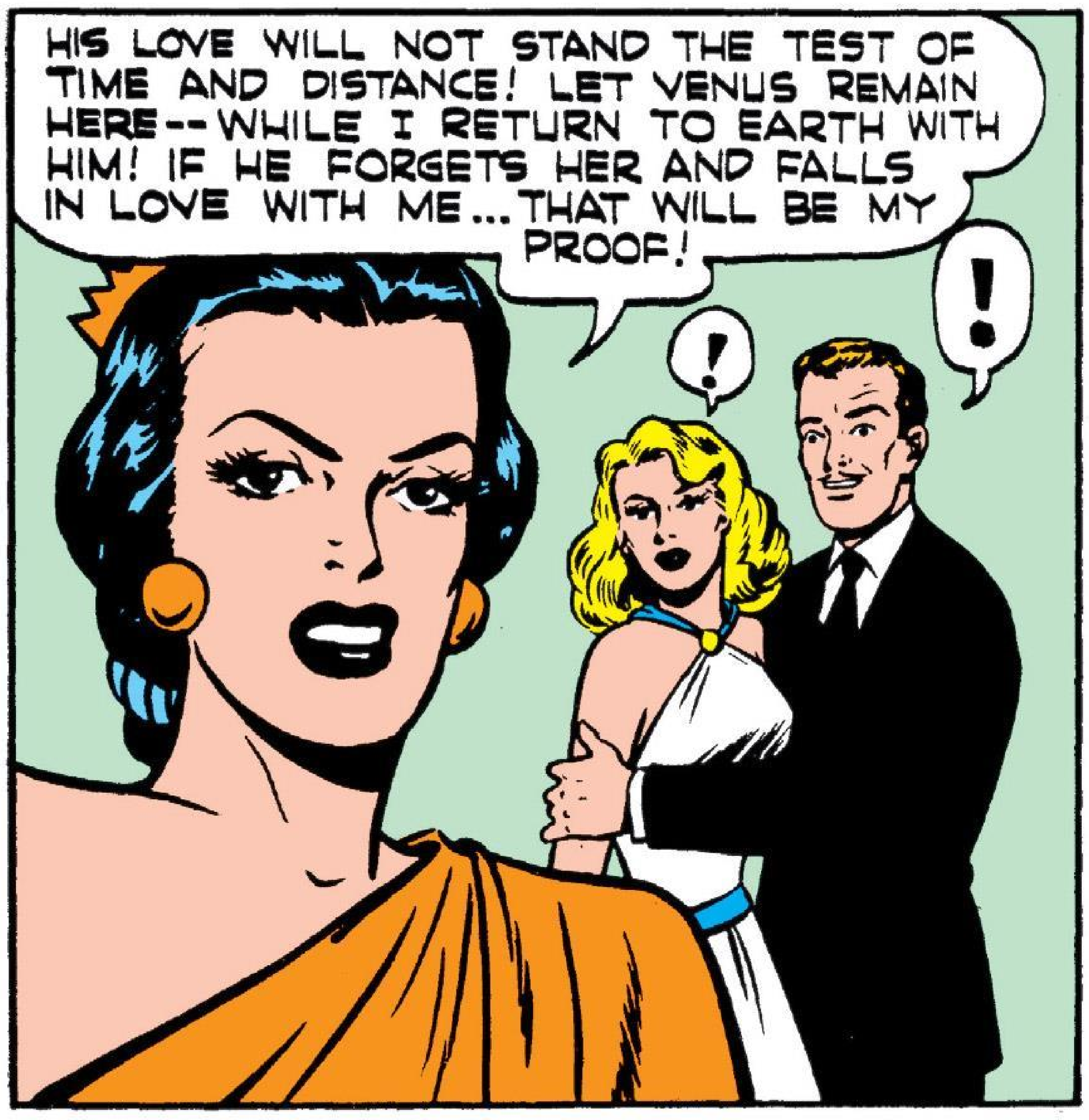

AND THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL AND EXCITING EXISTENCE! I HAD MANY ADVENTURES! I HELPED MAKE BEAUTY MAGAZINE SUCCESSFUL! I ASSISTED YOUNG LOVERS IN TROUBLE! I BROUGHT HAPPINESS TO MANY! I FELT WORTH WHILE AGAIN, AFTER CENTURIES OF IDLENESS! BUT, MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANY OF THESE...
"...I FOUND LOVE!"
DARLING, GODDESS OR MORTAL, WHATEVER, WHOEVER, YOU ARE, I LOVE YOU WITH ALL MY HEART!
AND I LOVE YOU, WHITNEY, MORE THAN WORDS CAN SAY!
YES, GODS OF OLYMPUS, WHITNEY'S LOVE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING ELSE TO ME! BUT... IS THAT WRONG? IS IT WRONG FOR ONE WHO HAS BROUGHT HAPPINESS TO SO MANY TO KNOW IT FOR HERSELF? YES, LOVE IS IMPORTANT TO ME FOR IT IS THE MOST PRECIOUS OF EMOTIONS TO EVERYONE, GODS AND MORTALS! IF YOU DESTROY MY POWERS, YOU DESTROY LOVE ITSELF!
ENTHRALLED AND ENCHANTED BY THE CHARM OF VENUS, THE GODS GAZE AT HER IN RAPTURE! AND STILL WHITNEY THINKS HE'S DREAMING!
AAH!
WHAT A GODDESS!
LUCKY MORTAL!
HMM! SO FAR THIS DREAM ISN'T BAD!
LOOK AT THEM SWOONING LIKE A BUNCH OF LOVE-SICK CALVES!
BLAST HER! SHE'S SWAYED THEM TO HER SIDE! BUT I STILL HAVE A CHANCE! MY FATHER, JUPITER, IS TOO AFRAID OF MY TEMPER TO FIGHT AGAINST ME--I'LL MAKE HIS LIFE MISERABLE IF HE JUDGES IN HER FAVOR!
BUT WHAT CAN YOU DO TO FIGHT HER, JOYA?
YOU'LL SEE! MIGHTY JOYA IS NOT THROUGH YET! THAT MORTAL IS FAR TOO HANDSOME TO LET HIM GET AWAY! OBSERVE HOW I WILL WIN OVER VENUS!
I DON'T LIKE THE WAY THAT DAME IS LOOKING AT ME! ...LIKE A BIRD OF PREY! BUT A BEAUTIFUL ONE, THOUGH!

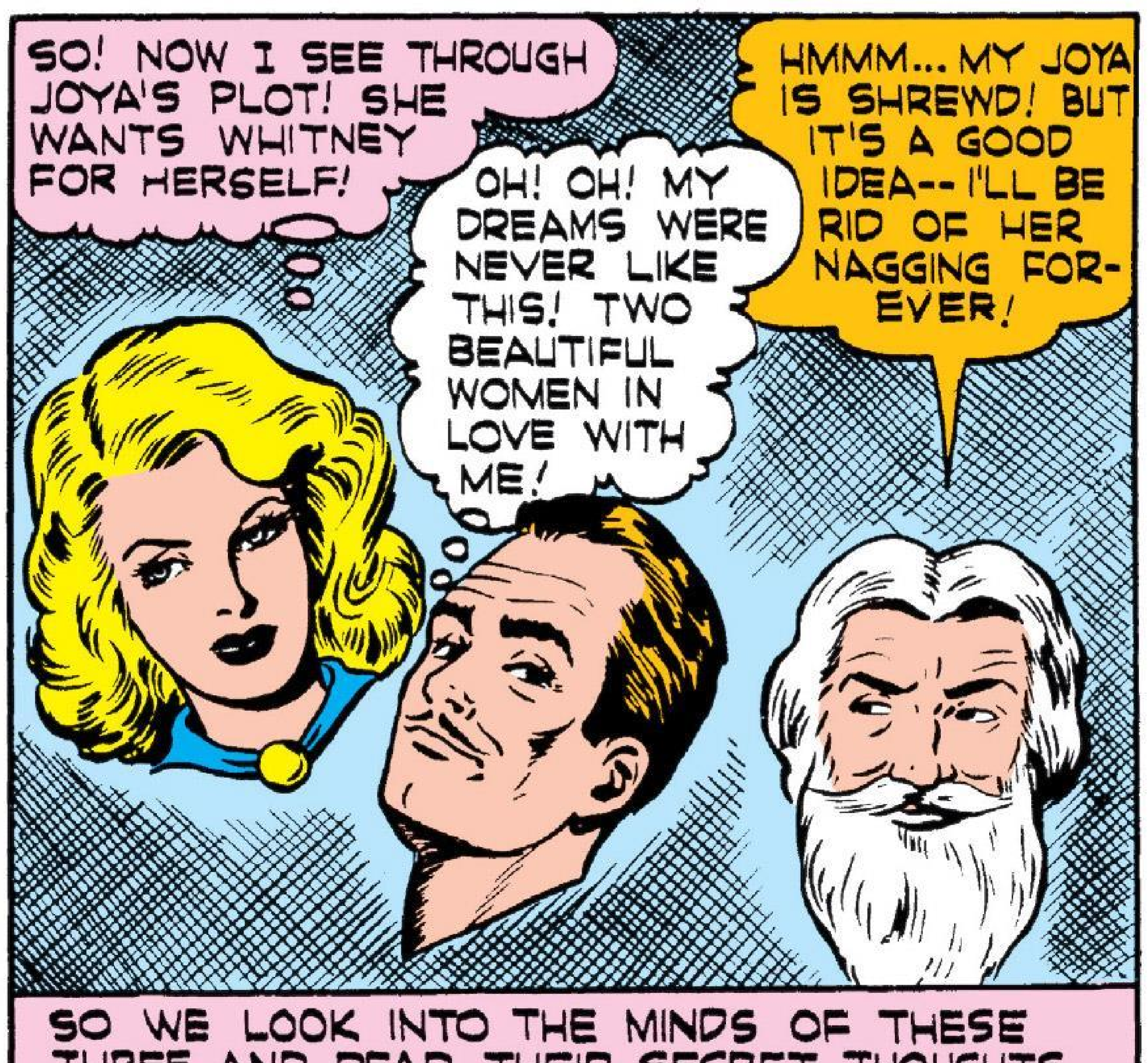

HER LIPS CURLED WITH SCORN, JOYA FLINGS HER VERBAL DARTS AT THE GODDESS OF LOVE!
SO, VENUS, OUR NOBLE GODS ARE NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU, EH? YOU HAD TO TRAVEL TO THE EARTH TO FIND LOVE!
ONE CAN NEVER TELL WHERE OR WHEN LOVE WILL COME! IN MY CASE IT CAME WHEN I FIRST SAW WHITNEY!

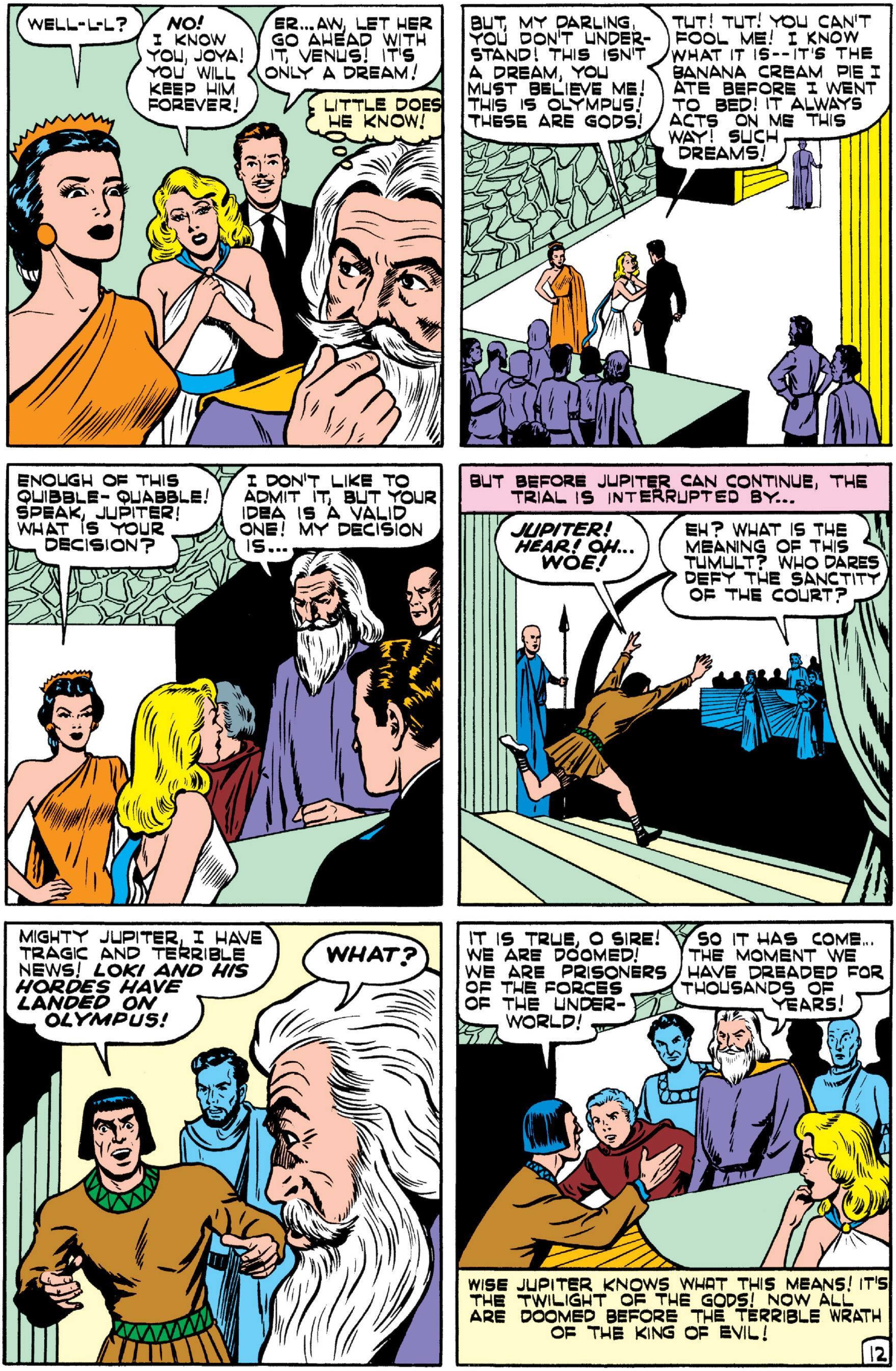

OH! OH! I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK IN MY FAIR BUT SHREWISH DAUGHTER'S EYES! SHE'S UP TO SOMETHING!
YOUR LOVE... BAH! THE LOVE OF A MORTAL IS A FICKLE THING!
NOW JUST A MINUTE, MISS! I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT INTO MY DREAM, BUT YOU'RE GRADUALLY TURNING IT INTO A NIGHTMARE! AND I'M NOT FICKLE!

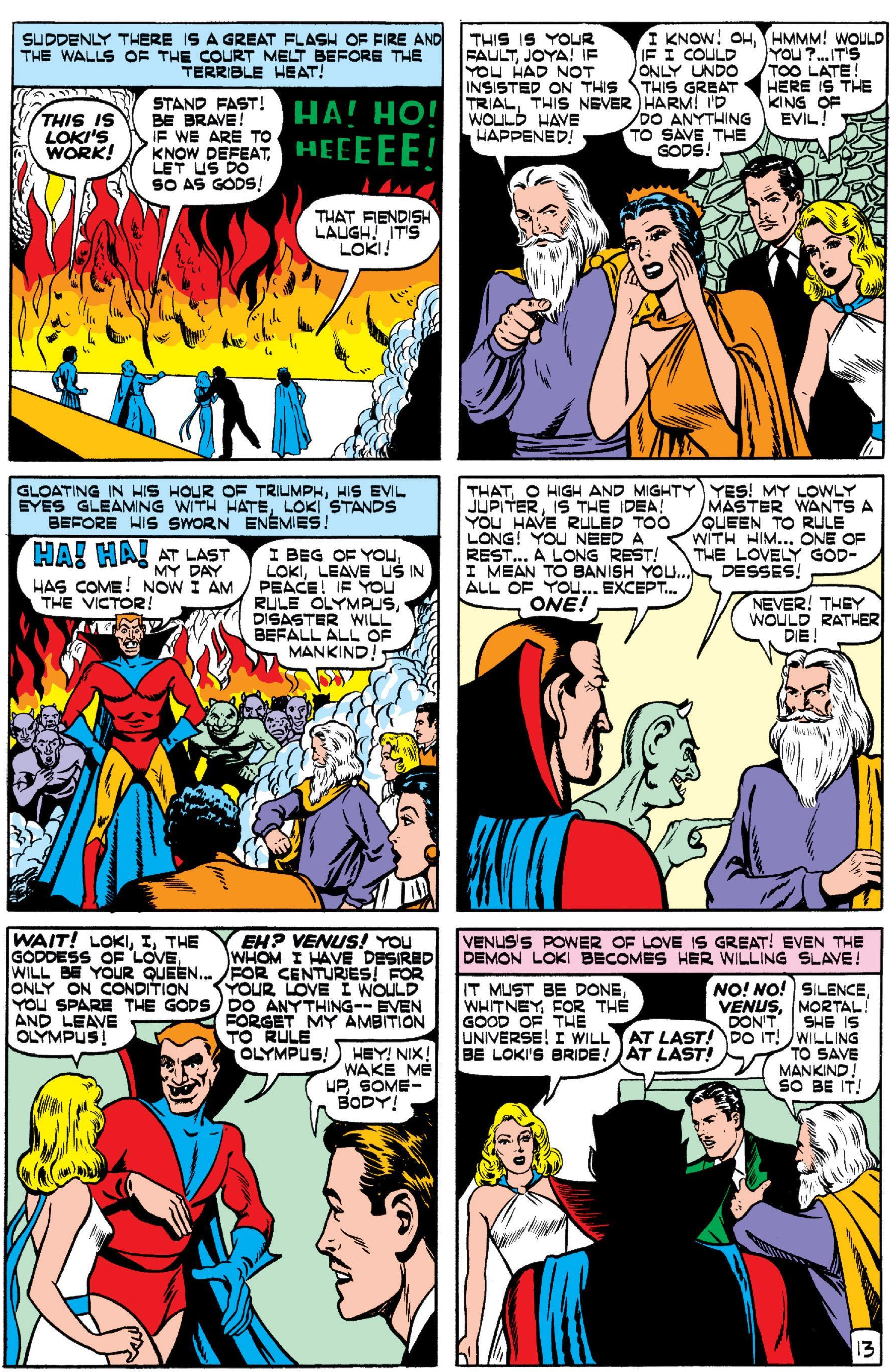

WEARISOME JOYA, BLIGHT OF MY LIFE, PLAGUE OF A GOD'S EXISTENCE, WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW?
OH, WORTHY FATHER, EVEN YOU, IN YOUR INFINITE WISDOM, WILL DEMAND PROOF OF THIS MORTAL'S LOVE FOR VENUS!

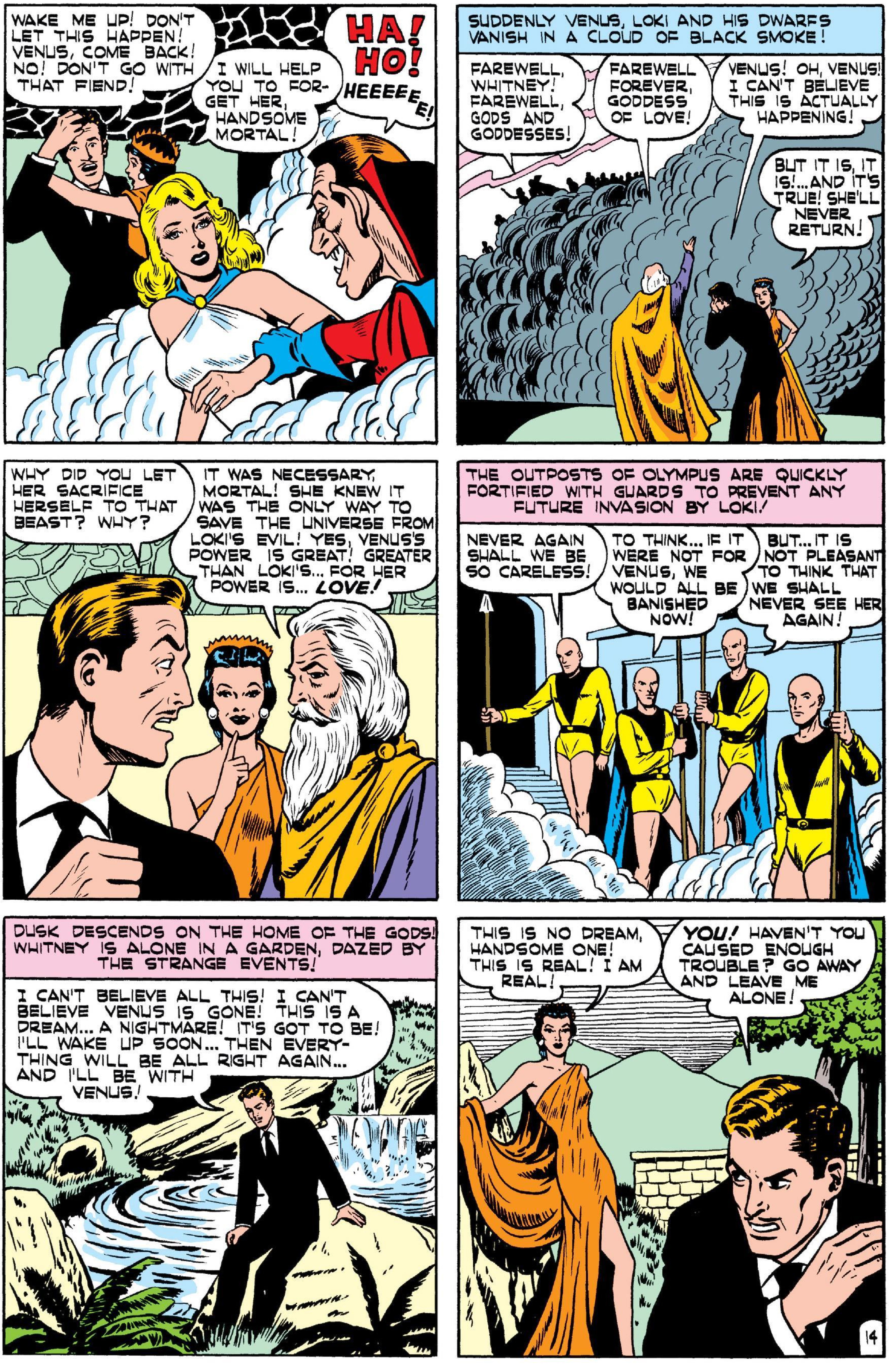

PROOF? LOOK AT THEM! ISN'T THAT PROOF ENOUGH FOR ANYONE?
NO! AND I HAVE A WAY TO SHOW YOU THAT HIS LOVE WILL VANISH WITH THE WIND!

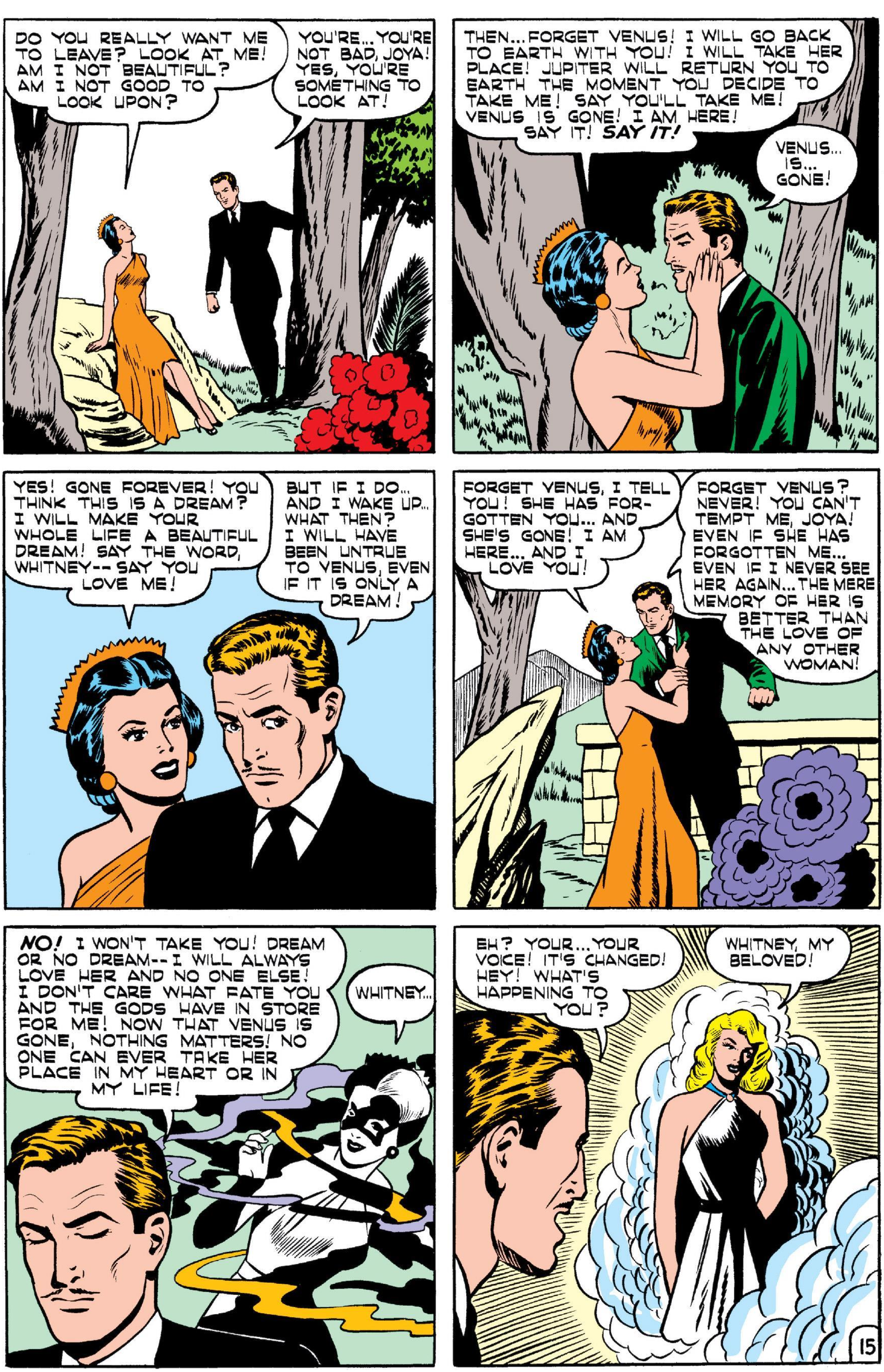

HIS LOVE WILL NOT STAND THE TEST OF TIME AND DISTANCE! LET VENUS REMAIN HERE--WHILE I RETURN TO EARTH WITH HIM! IF HE FORGETS HER AND FALLS IN LOVE WITH ME... THAT WILL BE MY PROOF!
!
!

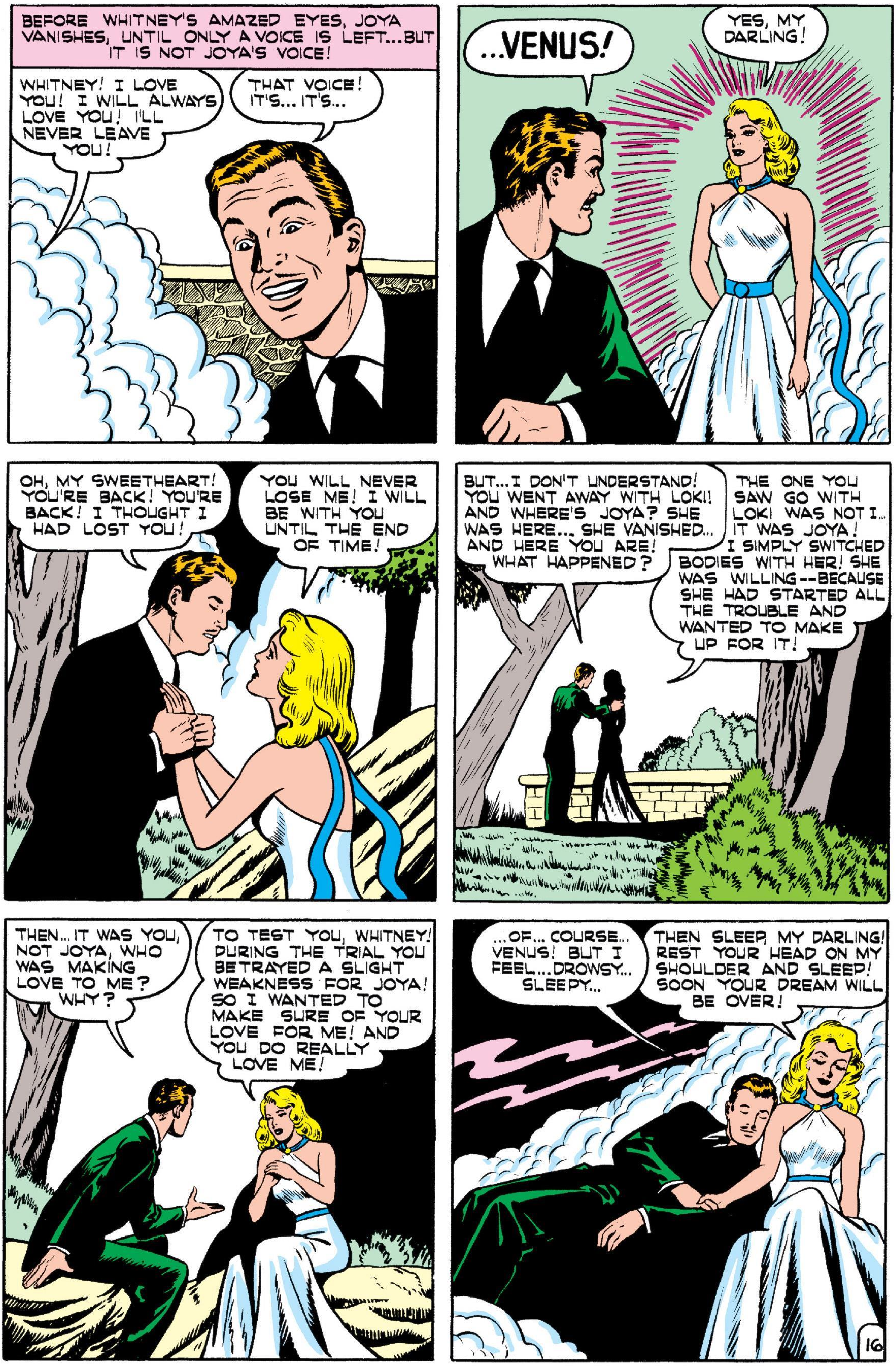

SO! NOW I SEE THROUGH JOYA'S PLOT! SHE WANTS WHITNEY FOR HERSELF!
OH! OH! MY DREAMS WERE NEVER LIKE THIS! TWO BEAUTIFUL WOMEN IN LOVE WITH ME!
HMMM... MY JOYA IS SHREWD! BUT IT'S A GOOD IDEA-- I'LL BE RID OF HER NAGGING FOREVER!
SO WE LOOK INTO THE MINDS OF THESE THREE AND READ THEIR SECRET THOUGHTS... ALL ADDING UP TO TROUBLE!

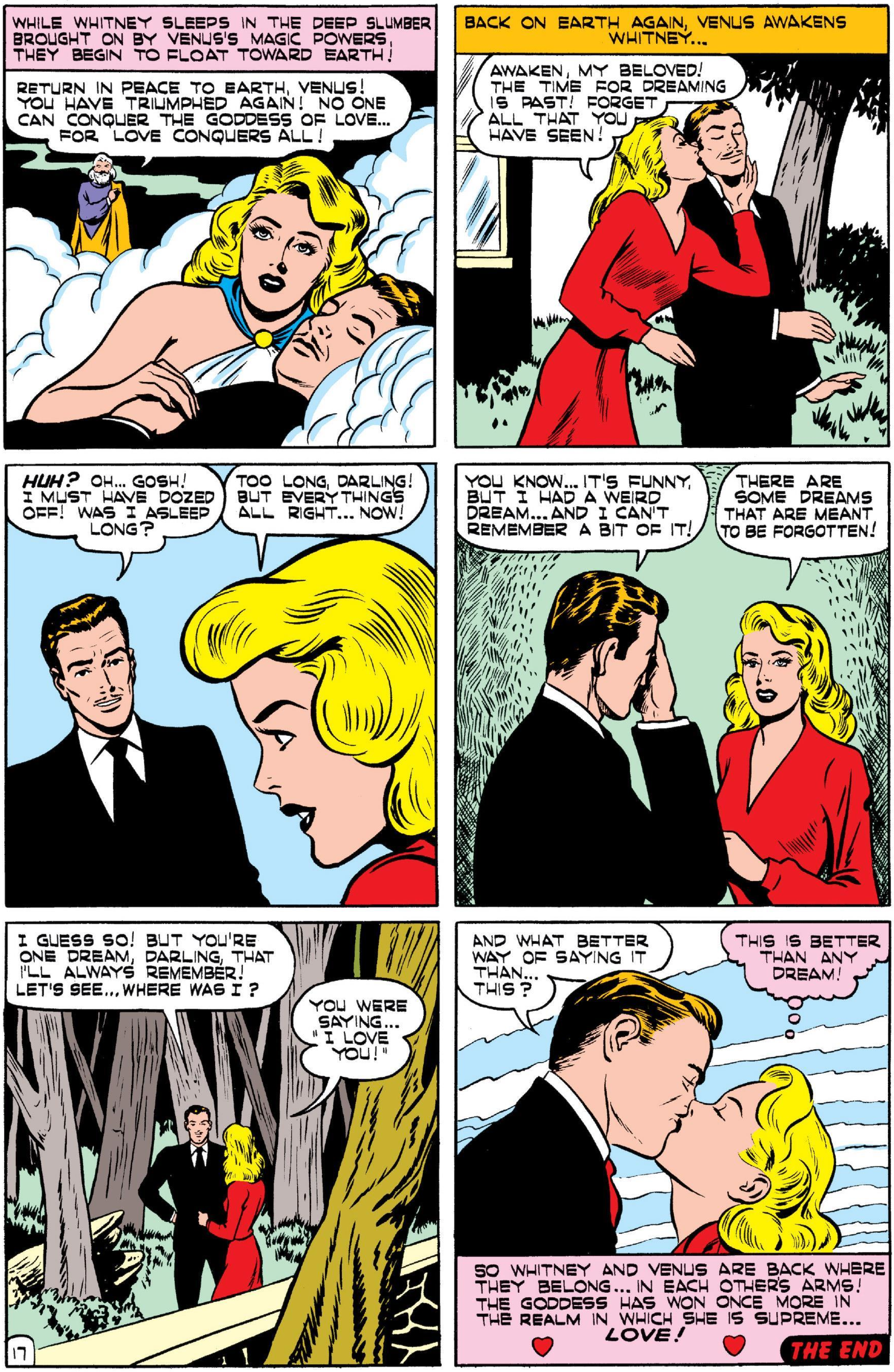

WELL-L-L?
NO! I KNOW YOU, JOYA! YOU WILL KEEP HIM FOREVER!
ER...AW, LET HER GO AHEAD WITH IT, VENUS! IT'S ONLY A DREAM!
LITTLE DOES HE KNOW!
BUT, MY DARLING, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THIS ISN'T A DREAM, YOU MUST BELIEVE ME! THIS IS OLYMPUS! THESE ARE GODS!
TUT! TUT! YOU CAN'T FOOL ME! I KNOW WHAT IT IS--IT'S THE BANANA CREAM PIE I ATE BEFORE I WENT TO BED! IT ALWAYS ACTS ON ME THIS WAY! SUCH DREAMS!
ENOUGH OF THIS QUIBBLE-QUABBLE! SPEAK, JUPITER! WHAT IS YOUR DECISION?
I DON'T LIKE TO ADMIT IT, BUT YOUR IDEA IS A VALID ONE! MY DECISION IS...
BUT BEFORE JUPITER CAN CONTINUE, THE TRIAL IS INTERRUPTED BY...
JUPITER! HEAR! OH... WOE!
EH? WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS TUMULT? WHO DARES DEFY THE SANCTITY OF THE COURT?
MIGHTY JUPITER, I HAVE TRAGIC AND TERRIBLE NEWS! LOKI AND HIS HORDES HAVE LANDED ON OLYMPUS!
WHAT?
IT IS TRUE, O SIRE! WE ARE DOOMED! WE ARE PRISONERS OF THE FORCES OF THE UNDERWORLD!
SO IT HAS COME... THE MOMENT WE HAVE DREADED FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS!
WISE JUPITER KNOWS WHAT THIS MEANS! IT'S THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS! NOW ALL ARE DOOMED BEFORE THE TERRIBLE WRATH OF THE KING OF EVIL!

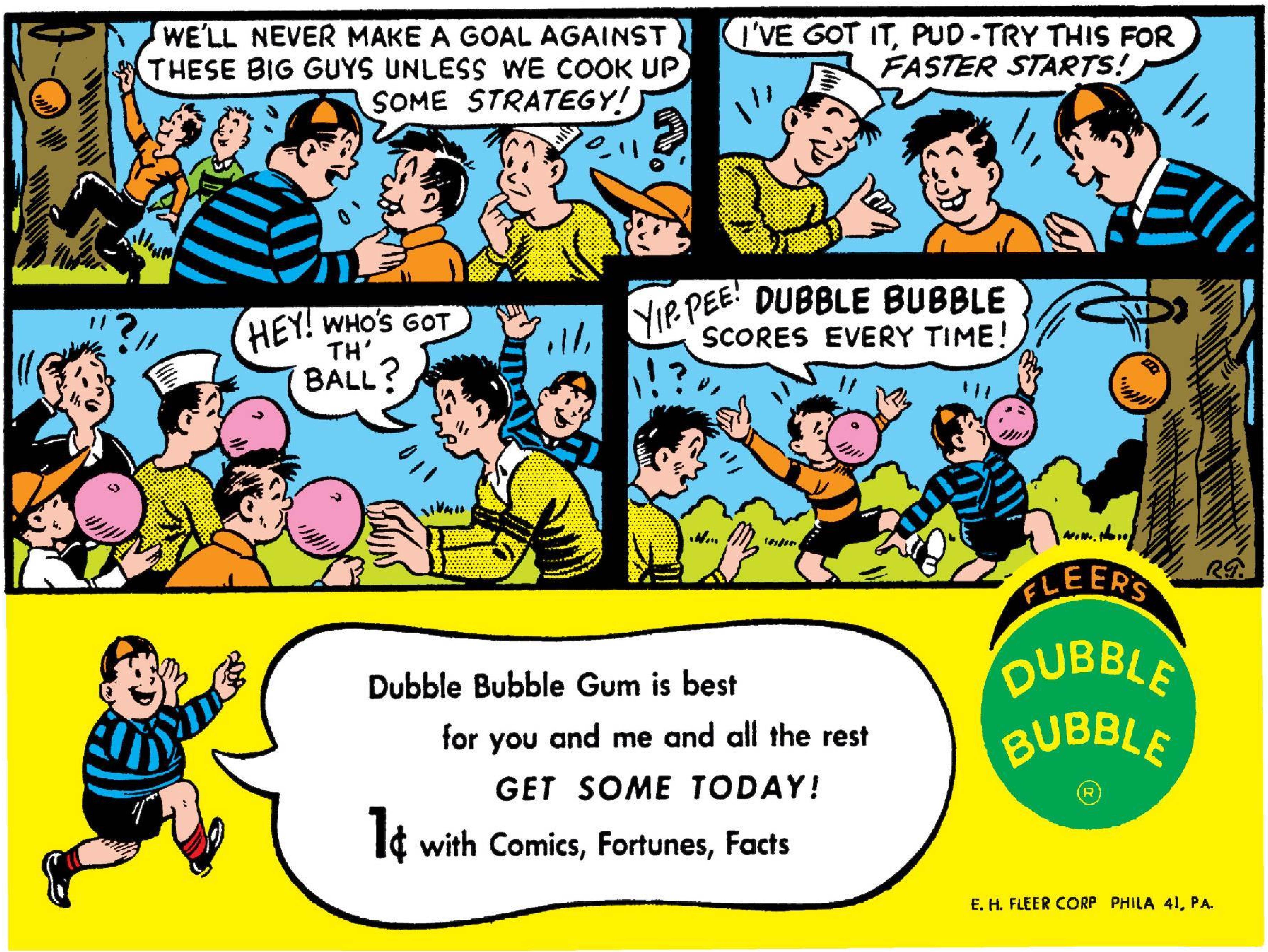

SUDDENLY THERE IS A GREAT FLASH OF FIRE AND THE WALLS OF THE COURT MELT BEFORE THE TERRIBLE HEAT!
THIS IS LOKI'S WORK!
STAND FAST! BE BRAVE! IF WE ARE TO KNOW DEFEAT, LET US DO SO AS GODS!
HA! HO! HEEEEE!
THAT FIENDISH LAUGH! IT'S LOKI!
THIS IS YOUR FAULT, JOYA! IF YOU HAD NOT INSISTED ON THIS TRIAL, THIS NEVER WOULD HAVE HAPPENED!
I KNOW! OH, IF I COULD ONLY UNDO THIS GREAT HARM! I'D DO ANYTHING TO SAVE THE GODS!
HMMM! WOULD YOU?...IT'S TOO LATE! HERE IS THE KING OF EVIL!
GLOATING IN HIS HOUR OF TRIUMPH, HIS EVIL EYES GLEAMING WITH HATE, LOKI STANDS BEFORE HIS SWORN ENEMIES!
HA! HA! AT LAST MY DAY HAS COME! NOW I AM THE VICTOR!
I BEG OF YOU, LOKI, LEAVE US IN PEACE! IF YOU RULE OLYMPUS, DISASTER WILL BEFALL ALL OF MANKIND!
THAT, O HIGH AND MIGHTY JUPITER, IS THE IDEA! YOU HAVE RULED TOO LONG! YOU NEED A REST... A LONG REST! I MEAN TO BANISH YOU... ALL OF YOU... EXCEPT... ONE!
YES! MY LOWLY MASTER WANTS A QUEEN TO RULE WITH HIM... ONE OF THE LOVELY GODDESSES!
NEVER! THEY WOULD RATHER DIE!
WAIT! LOKI, I, THE GODDESS OF LOVE, WILL BE YOUR QUEEN... ONLY ON CONDITION YOU SPARE THE GODS AND LEAVE OLYMPUS!
EH? VENUS! YOU WHOM I HAVE DESIRED FOR CENTURIES! FOR YOUR LOVE I WOULD DO ANYTHING-- EVEN FORGET MY AMBITION TO RULE OLYMPUS!
HEY! NIX! WAKE ME UP, SOMEBODY!
VENUS'S POWER OF LOVE IS GREAT! EVEN THE DEMON LOKI BECOMES HER WILLING SLAVE!
IT MUST BE DONE, WHITNEY, FOR THE GOOD OF THE UNIVERSE! I WILL BE LOKI'S BRIDE!
AT LAST! AT LAST!
NO! NO! VENUS, DON'T DO IT!
SILENCE, MORTAL! SHE IS WILLING TO SAVE MANKIND! SO BE IT!


WAKE ME UP! DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN! VENUS, COME BACK! NO! DON'T GO WITH THAT FIEND!
I WILL HELP YOU TO FORGET HER, HANDSOME MORTAL!
HA! HO! HEEEEEEE!
SUDDENLY VENUS, LOKI AND HIS DWARFS VANISH IN A CLOUD OF BLACK SMOKE!
FAREWELL, WHITNEY! FAREWELL, GODS AND GODDESSES!
FAREWELL FOREVER, GODDESS OF LOVE!
VENUS! OH, VENUS! I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING!
BUT IT IS, IT IS!...AND IT'S TRUE! SHE'LL NEVER RETURN!
WHY DID YOU LET HER SACRIFICE HERSELF TO THAT BEAST? WHY?
IT WAS NECESSARY, MORTAL! SHE KNEW IT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO SAVE THE UNIVERSE FROM LOKI'S EVIL! YES, VENUS'S POWER IS GREAT! GREATER THAN LOKI'S... FOR HER POWER IS... LOVE!
THE OUTPOSTS OF OLYMPUS ARE QUICKLY FORTIFIED WITH GUARDS TO PREVENT ANY FUTURE INVASION BY LOKI!
NEVER AGAIN SHALL WE BE SO CARELESS!
TO THINK... IF IT WERE NOT FOR VENUS, WE WOULD ALL BE BANISHED NOW!
BUT... IT IS NOT PLEASANT TO THINK THAT WE SHALL NEVER SEE HER AGAIN!
DUSK DESCENDS ON THE HOME OF THE GODS! WHITNEY IS ALONE IN A GARDEN, DAZED BY THE STRANGE EVENTS!
I CAN'T BELIEVE ALL THIS! I CAN'T BELIEVE VENUS IS GONE! THIS IS A DREAM... A NIGHTMARE! IT'S GOT TO BE! I'LL WAKE UP SOON... THEN EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT AGAIN... AND I'LL BE WITH VENUS!
THIS IS NO DREAM, HANDSOME ONE! THIS IS REAL! I AM REAL!
YOU! HAVEN'T YOU CAUSED ENOUGH TROUBLE? GO AWAY AND LEAVE ME ALONE!


DO YOU REALLY WANT ME TO LEAVE? LOOK AT ME! AM I NOT BEAUTIFUL? AM I NOT GOOD TO LOOK UPON?
YOU'RE...YOU'RE NOT BAD, JOYA! YES, YOU'RE SOMETHING TO LOOK AT!
THEN...FORGET VENUS! I WILL GO BACK TO EARTH WITH YOU! I WILL TAKE HER PLACE! JUPITER WILL RETURN YOU TO EARTH THE MOMENT YOU DECIDE TO TAKE ME! SAY YOU'LL TAKE ME! VENUS IS GONE! I AM HERE! SAY IT! SAY IT!
VENUS... IS... GONE!
YES! GONE FOREVER! YOU THINK THIS IS A DREAM? I WILL MAKE YOUR WHOLE LIFE A BEAUTIFUL DREAM! SAY THE WORD, WHITNEY-- SAY YOU LOVE ME!
BUT IF I DO... AND I WAKE UP... WHAT THEN? I WILL HAVE BEEN UNTRUE TO VENUS, EVEN IF IT IS ONLY A DREAM!
FORGET VENUS, I TELL YOU! SHE HAS FORGOTTEN YOU... AND SHE'S GONE! I AM HERE... AND I LOVE YOU!
FORGET VENUS? NEVER! YOU CAN'T TEMPT ME, JOYA! EVEN IF SHE HAS FORGOTTEN ME... EVEN IF I NEVER SEE HER AGAIN... THE MERE MEMORY OF HER IS BETTER THAN THE LOVE OF ANY OTHER WOMAN!
NO! I WON'T TAKE YOU! DREAM OR NO DREAM-- I WILL ALWAYS LOVE HER AND NO ONE ELSE! I DON'T CARE WHAT FATE YOU AND THE GODS HAVE IN STORE FOR ME! NOW THAT VENUS IS GONE, NOTHING MATTERS! NO ONE CAN EVER TAKE HER PLACE IN MY HEART OR IN MY LIFE!
WHITNEY...
EH? YOUR...YOUR VOICE! IT'S CHANGED! HEY! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOU?
WHITNEY, MY BELOVED!


BEFORE WHITNEY'S AMAZED EYES, JOYA VANISHES, UNTIL ONLY A VOICE IS LEFT...BUT IT IS NOT JOYA'S VOICE!
WHITNEY! I LOVE YOU! I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU! I'LL NEVER LEAVE YOU!
THAT VOICE! IT'S... IT'S...
...VENUS!
YES, MY DARLING!
OH, MY SWEETHEART! YOU'RE BACK! YOU'RE BACK! I THOUGHT I HAD LOST YOU!
YOU WILL NEVER LOSE ME! I WILL BE WITH YOU UNTIL THE END OF TIME!
BUT...I DON'T UNDERSTAND! YOU WENT AWAY WITH LOKI! AND WHERE'S JOYA? SHE WAS HERE... SHE VANISHED... AND HERE YOU ARE! WHAT HAPPENED?
THE ONE YOU SAW GO WITH LOKI WAS NOT I... IT WAS JOYA! I SIMPLY SWITCHED BODIES WITH HER! SHE WAS WILLING--BECAUSE SHE HAD STARTED ALL THE TROUBLE AND WANTED TO MAKE UP FOR IT!
THEN... IT WAS YOU, NOT JOYA, WHO WAS MAKING LOVE TO ME? WHY?
TO TEST YOU, WHITNEY! DURING THE TRIAL YOU BETRAYED A SLIGHT WEAKNESS FOR JOYA! SO I WANTED TO MAKE SURE OF YOUR LOVE FOR ME! AND YOU DO REALLY LOVE ME!
...OF... COURSE... VENUS! BUT I FEEL...DROWSY... SLEEPY...
THEN SLEEP, MY DARLING! REST YOUR HEAD ON MY SHOULDER AND SLEEP! SOON YOUR DREAM WILL BE OVER!


WHILE WHITNEY SLEEPS IN THE DEEP SLUMBER BROUGHT ON BY VENUS'S MAGIC POWERS, THEY BEGIN TO FLOAT TOWARD EARTH!
RETURN IN PEACE TO EARTH, VENUS! YOU HAVE TRIUMPHED AGAIN! NO ONE CAN CONQUER THE GODDESS OF LOVE... FOR LOVE CONQUERS ALL!
BACK ON EARTH AGAIN, VENUS AWAKENS WHITNEY...
AWAKEN, MY BELOVED! THE TIME FOR DREAMING IS PAST! FORGET ALL THAT YOU HAVE SEEN!
HUH? OH... GOSH! I MUST HAVE DOZED OFF! WAS I ASLEEP LONG?
TOO LONG, DARLING! BUT EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT... NOW!
YOU KNOW... IT'S FUNNY, BUT I HAD A WEIRD DREAM... AND I CAN'T REMEMBER A BIT OF IT!
THERE ARE SOME DREAMS THAT ARE MEANT TO BE FORGOTTEN!
I GUESS SO! BUT YOU'RE ONE DREAM, DARLING, THAT I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER! LET'S SEE... WHERE WAS I?
YOU WERE SAYING... "I LOVE YOU!"
AND WHAT BETTER WAY OF SAYING IT THAN... THIS?
THIS IS BETTER THAN ANY DREAM!
SO WHITNEY AND VENUS ARE BACK WHERE THEY BELONG... IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS! THE GODDESS HAS WON ONCE MORE IN THE REALM IN WHICH SHE IS SUPREME... LOVE!
THE END


WE'LL NEVER MAKE A GOAL AGAINST THESE BIG GUYS UNLESS WE COOK UP SOME STRATEGY!
I'VE GOT IT, PUD-TRY THIS FOR FASTER STARTS!
HEY! WHO'S GOT TH' BALL?
YIP-PEE! DUBBLE BUBBLE SCORES EVERY TIME!
FLEER'S
DUBBLE BUBBLE ®
Dubble Bubble Gum is best
for you and me and all the rest
GET SOME TODAY!
1¢ with Comics, Fortunes, Facts
E. H. FLEER CORP PHILA 41, PA.

MY CHANCE FOR LOVE

I WAS in no mood for pleasantries as I walked into the park and sat down. A young man at the opposite end of the bench was eating peanuts. The way in which he snapped open the shells was annoying, but since he had been there first, I couldn't ask him to move. I glanced around but the other benches were full.

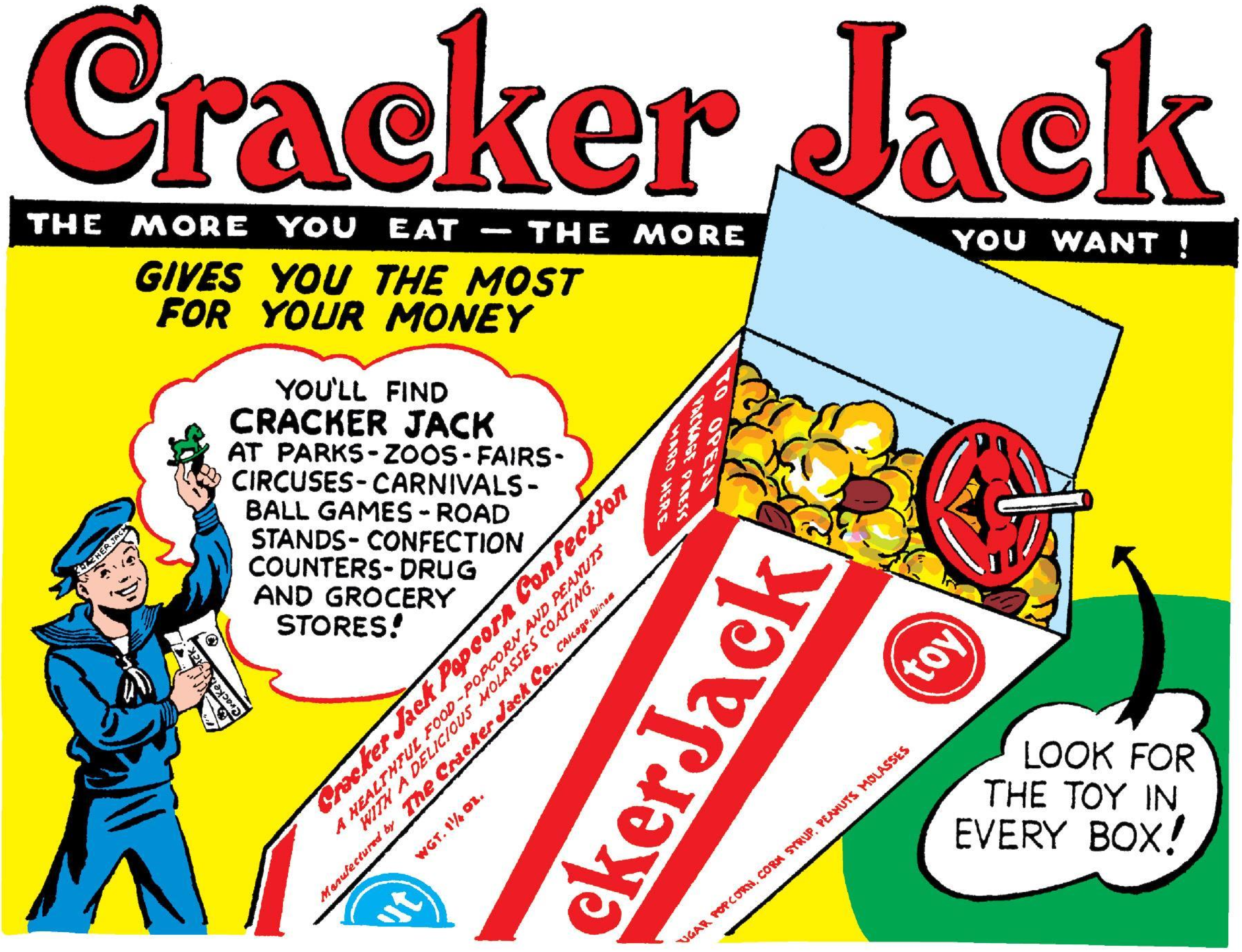
I took off my hat and flopped it down beside me. I would have liked to slip off my shoes, but a half-glance at the young man reminded me that I had better not. He was still snapping peanuts in a dreamy way, while I wiggled my toes, frowning slightly.

What difference did it make if it was a warm summery day? When one was a child, he could hang by his knees and look upside down at the world—and after a while it would seen as if he were walking on those big fluffy clouds. That was fine for youngsters . . . but not for me. At twenty-two one stopped dreaming. That is, if he had any sense, he did. The trouble was, just let a sunny afternoon come—and zoom!—there I'd be upside down, day-dreaming of the future.

For instance, why had I told Mr. Bingham I was too ill to come to work today? I had merely overslept and called the office to say I'd be late, when the silly words popped out. And here I was sitting on a park bench without an ounce of remorse or shame.

Tomorrow was Saturday. Most people would leave the city and go to friends or relatives living in the country. They would pack a swimming suit, get on the train, and in a little while the long sloping hills would begin, with distant patches of trees and cows lazily switching their tails. Soon there was a tiny station—and a house, bright and gay, with its freshly-cut flowers and sheets still smelling of their brisk flapping in the wind.

None of that was for me. I didn't know anyone in the country. There was only the park on weekends—scrambling for a bench or a patch of grass, children screaming about you, bicycles getting in the way, the sudden bursting of a child's balloon, and the cries of babies being lulled to sleep by nurses shaking the carriages.


Cracker Jack
THE MORE YOU EAT — THE MORE YOU WANT!
GIVES YOU THE MOST FOR YOUR MONEY
YOU'LL FIND CRACKER JACK AT PARKS - ZOOS - FAIRS - CIRCUSES - CARNIVALS - BALL GAMES - ROAD STANDS - CONFECTION COUNTERS - DRUG AND GROCERY STORES!
TO OPEN PACKAGE PRESS HARD HERE
Cracker Jack Popcorn Confection
A HEALTHFUL FOOD - POPCORN AND PEANUTS WITH A DELICIOUS MOLASSES COATING.
Manufactured by The Cracker Jack Co., Chicago, Illinois
WGT. 1¼ OZ.
Cracker Jack
toy
SUGAR, POPCORN, CORN SYRUP, PEANUTS, MOLASSES
LOOK FOR THE TOY IN EVERY BOX!

I sighed and tried to forget my two dingy rooms with the faded geraniums that wouldn't grow . . . and tried to forget how far away from me the country was.

Someday, maybe, I'd have a house of my own, a small one with sunny rooms and a garden with pink and red geraniums . . . but there I was hanging by my knees again!

"Have a peanut," the young man said, holding out his bag.

I took one and very noisily snapped the shell.

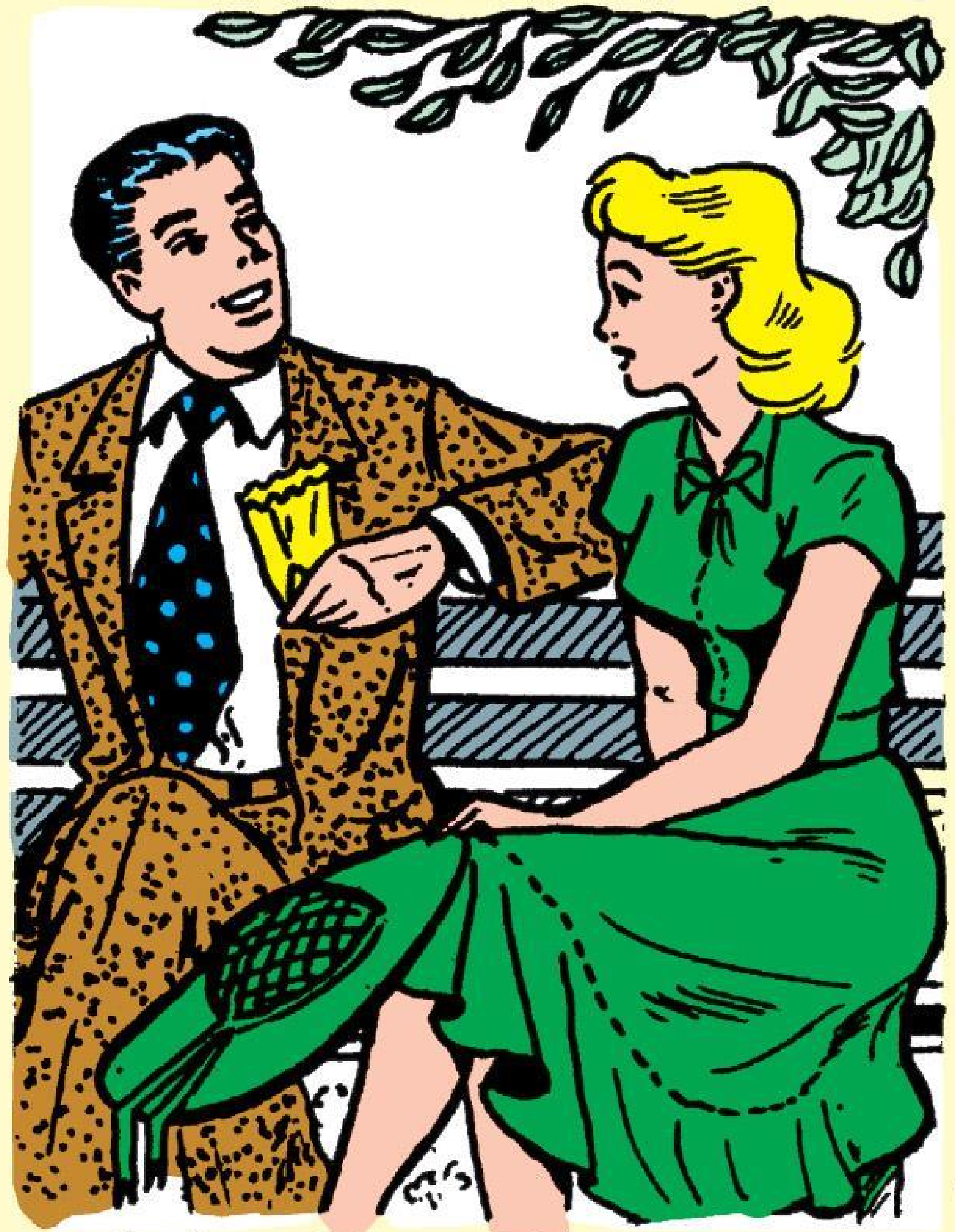
Two pigeons came down the path, one strutting before the other with silly coos. For some reason it made me smile.

The young man turned to me. "That's better," he said. "Have another one."

I took one more. "Thank you."

"Oh, you're welcome," he replied and we both laughed.

After that we sat eating peanuts for a while without saying anything. A large woman came by and eyed the bench. As I turned and picked up my hat, the young man slid next to me. The woman crossed to the end and sat down. She stretched her feet out in front of her and in a few minutes was sound asleep.



"I hope she doesn't snore," the young man said.

"Women don't snore," I explained.

"Then somebody better tell my landlady. You can hear her three flights up."

"Could be her husband," I said.

"Hasn't any," he replied. "She only has a canary who is too old to sing, let alone snore."

"Oh," I said.

I was feeling better now. This wasn't the country, to be sure, but when I thought of Mr. Bingham's expression if he could see me playing hooky, I felt much happier.

"Hmm," I said. "It's good for the morale."

"What is?" the young man asked. "Snoring?"

"Of course not," I said, realizing I had spoken out loud. "I mean the park. It's not country, but the trees and the sunshine fool me into thinking that I'm not in the middle of a city." I took a deep breath. "It's good not to be working today," I added.

"Oh, I agree with you," he said, and I noticed that he was a very good-looking young man. He sat slouched back on the bench, one knee balancing his hat, but behind his apparent lassitude, there was a note of intense energy.

"You like the country?" he asked.

"Golly yes," I answered.

"I don't like the city either," he said. "This is the sort of day to go for a spin in a car—only I don't have a car."

We had finished the peanuts, and so he crumpled the bag and threw it away. He pulled out a handkerchief, wiped his hands with it, and stuffed it back into his pocket again. Then he folded his hands in back of his head. A squirrel came to investigate the empty shells.

The woman at the end of the bench let out a snore.

"I warned you," he said, and we both laughed.

"You have a very nice laugh," he said.

For a while we sat watching the people pass by. Then, suddenly, he looked at his watch.

"Oh-oh," he said. "I'm going to be late for my appointment, if I don't hurry."

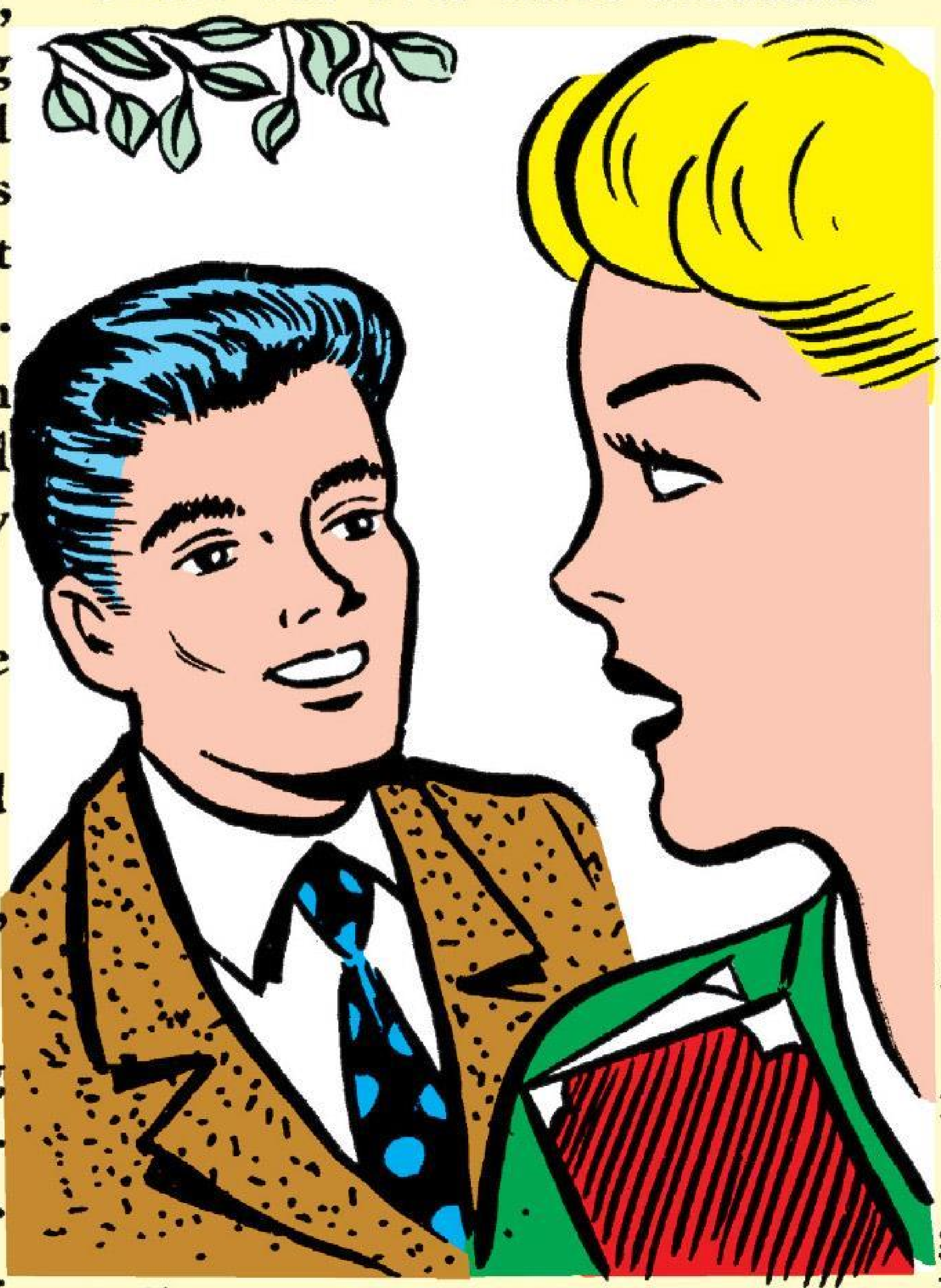
He put on his hat and stood up. He was tall and held his shoulders straight so that all traces of his slouch were gone. He smiled.

"Thank you for sharing my peanuts with me," he said. Then he walked away.

Somehow I wished he had asked for my name. I watched until he had disappeared beyond the chain of baby carriages at the bend, but he didn't turn around. It was crazy, yet I felt empty knowing that I would never see him again.

When I tossed my hat back down on the bench, I heard something fall. I looked down and saw a man's wallet lying on the grass. I was filled with excitement as I bent to pick it up. There must be some sort of identification inside, I thought, and perhaps I would be seeing him again, after all.

I opened the wallet, and at my first glance, I forgot about everything else. The wallet was filled with hundred-dollar bills. I opened my purse, slipped the wallet inside, and slowly began counting. Before long, I felt like Rockefeller's cousin. There was over three thousand dollars—and no identification!



I closed my purse. The woman at the end of the bench was still sleeping. Thoughts whirled by so rapidly I was stunned. Three thousand dollars was enough for a down payment on a house in the country. My dream come true. I could see it already—the rooms filled with sunlight and a fireplace in the living room. The garden would be full of roses with hollihocks against the fence and a border of sweet williams along the path. And in back there would be fresh peas and scallions ready to pick for dinner. I could sit on the porch and shell them—and then, somehow, I saw a tall young man coming toward me. He waved his hand and smiled, and as he opened the gate, I ran to meet him and he held me in his arms . . .

I opened my eyes and for a moment it seemed as if I were still dreaming. The young man stood before me, and I could see straight into his blue eyes.

"I had to come back," he said. "I guess you'll think I'm crazy, but I got clear over to Fifth Avenue before I remembered I didn't ask your name."

I felt my heart quicken. Then it wasn't the money that had brought him back . . .

"It's Julie," I said. "And yours?"

"Bill," he answered, and we both laughed.

I opened my purse and took out his wallet. "You dropped this," I said.

"Holy cow!" he exclaimed. "When did you find it?"

"A little while after you left. It fell on the grass."

"That's the sum total of my life's earning," Bill said. "I guess this is my lucky day."

"You should be more careful."

"You're right," he replied, grinning. "It's good for me that I liked your smile, otherwise I wouldn't have come back."

I looked at Bill. My dream had been close to me, but I had no regrets.

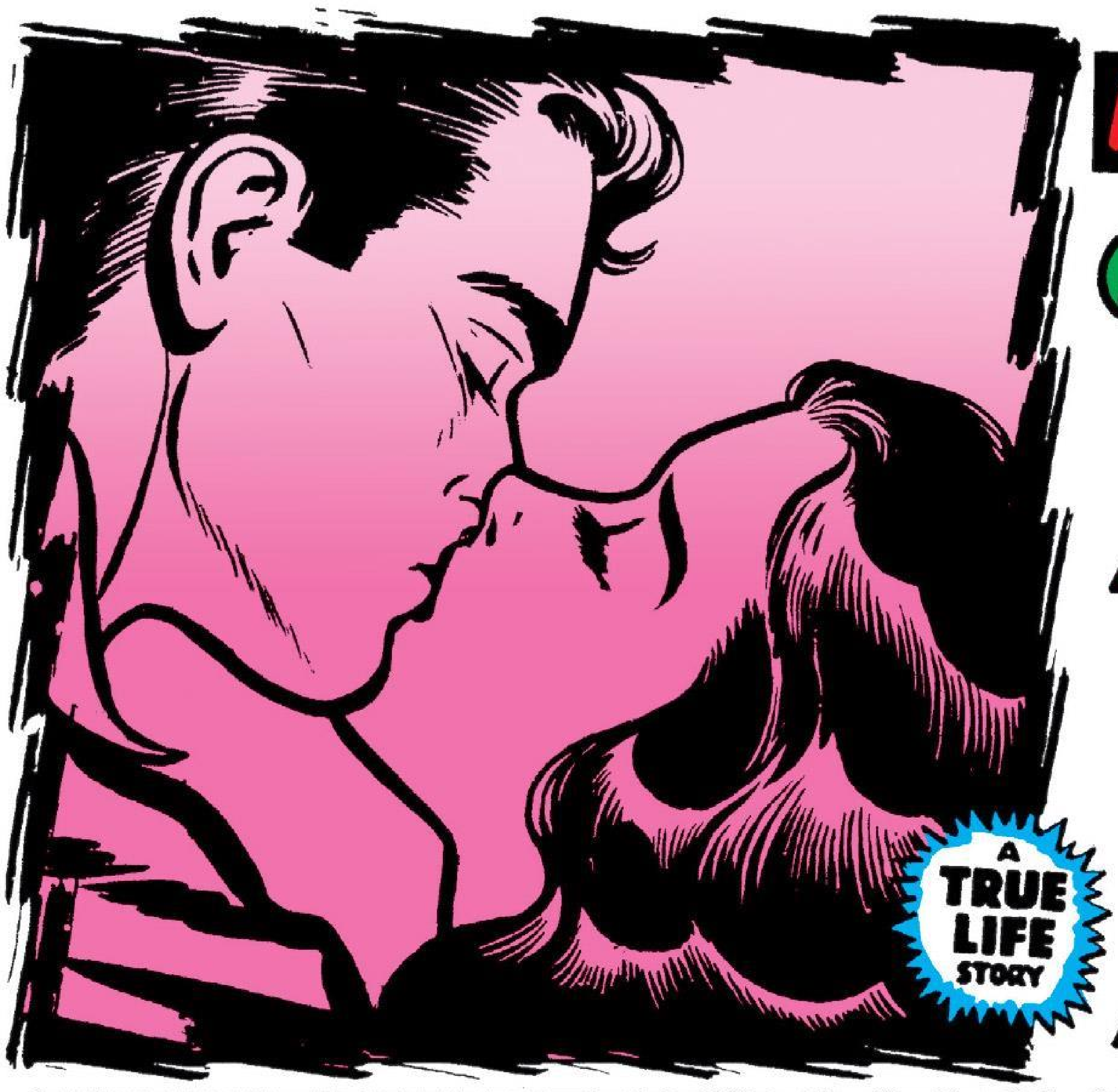
"Gosh, Julie," he continued, "you must be my guardian angel. Come with me while I keep my appointment, then we'll have dinner. I'll have you and a house to celebrate."

"A house?" I repeated.

"Uh-huh. This money's for a place I'm getting in the country."

As we walked off together, I felt myself going upside down again, but I was too happy to care.

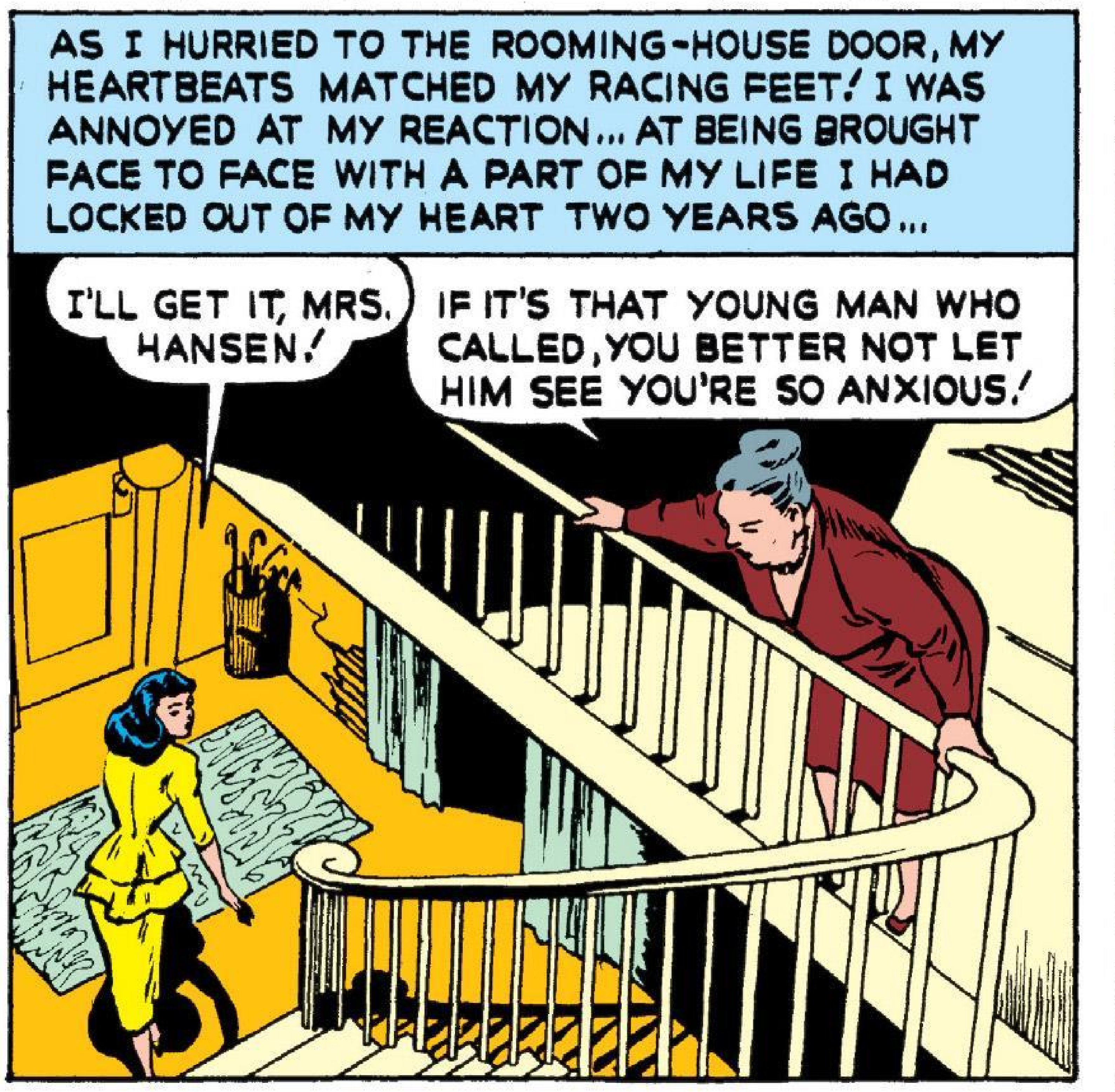
THE END 6521

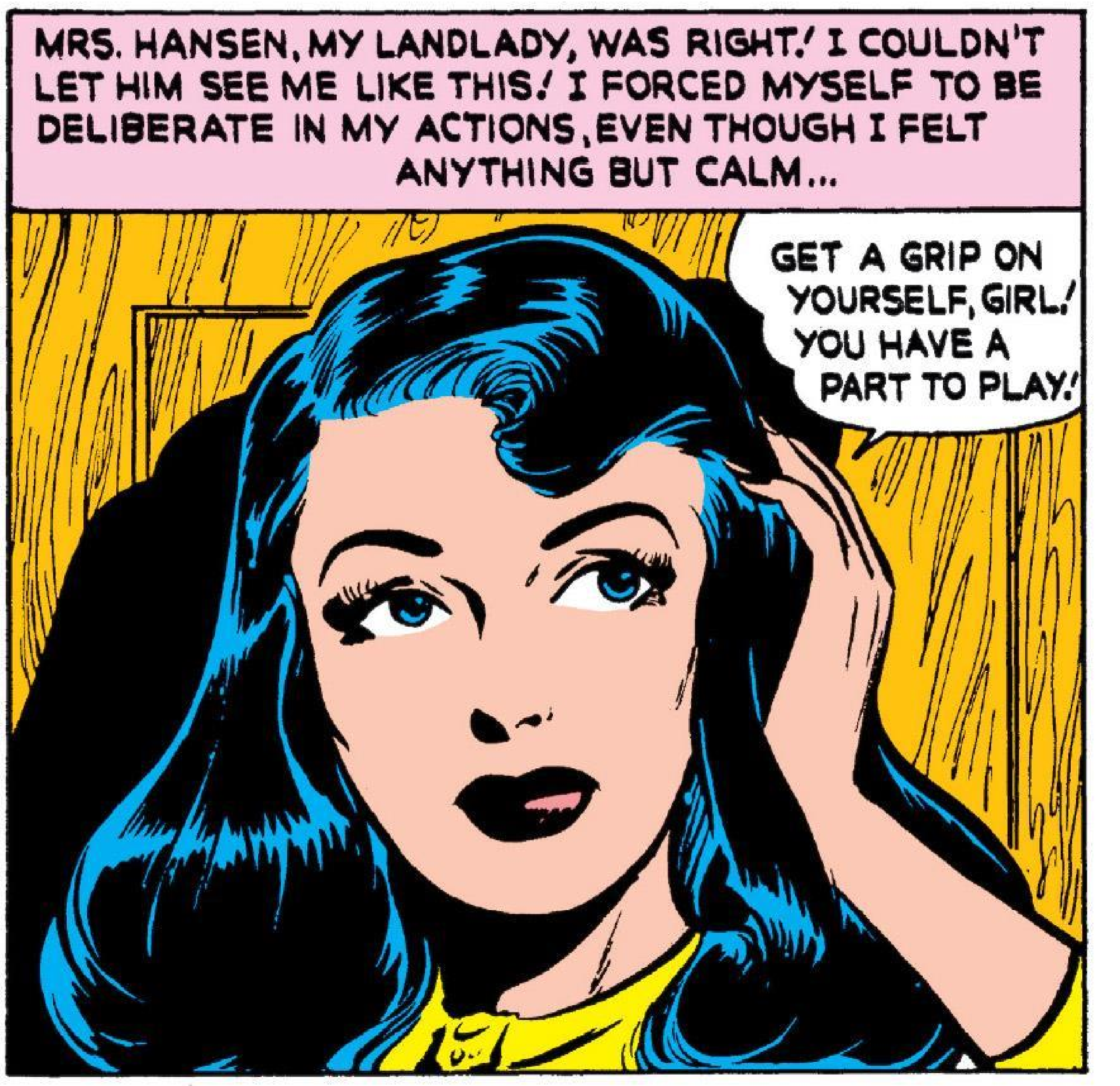

A TRUE LIFE STORY

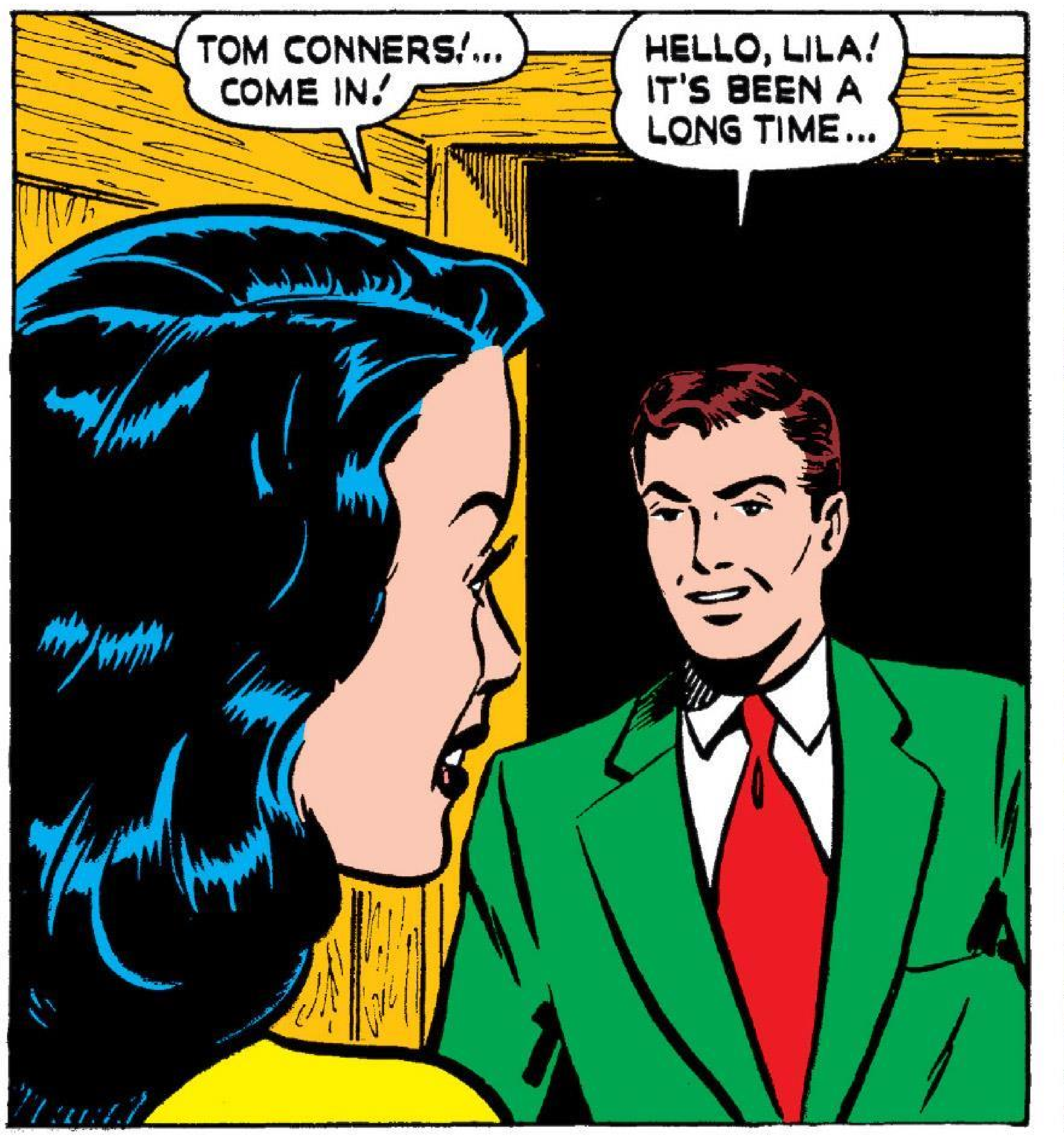
A TRUE-TO-LIFE ROMANCE

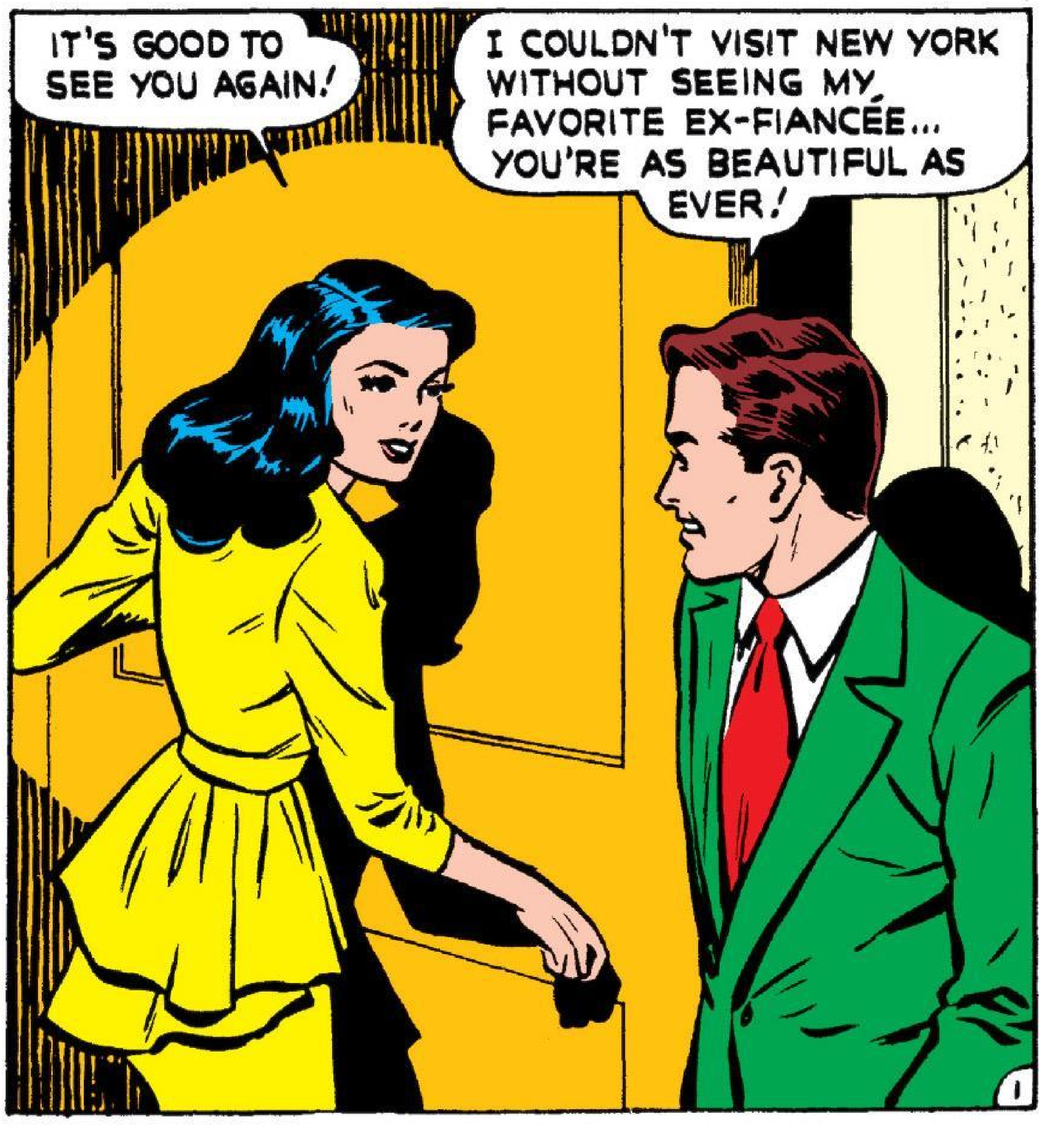
"LEAVE ME NEVER!"

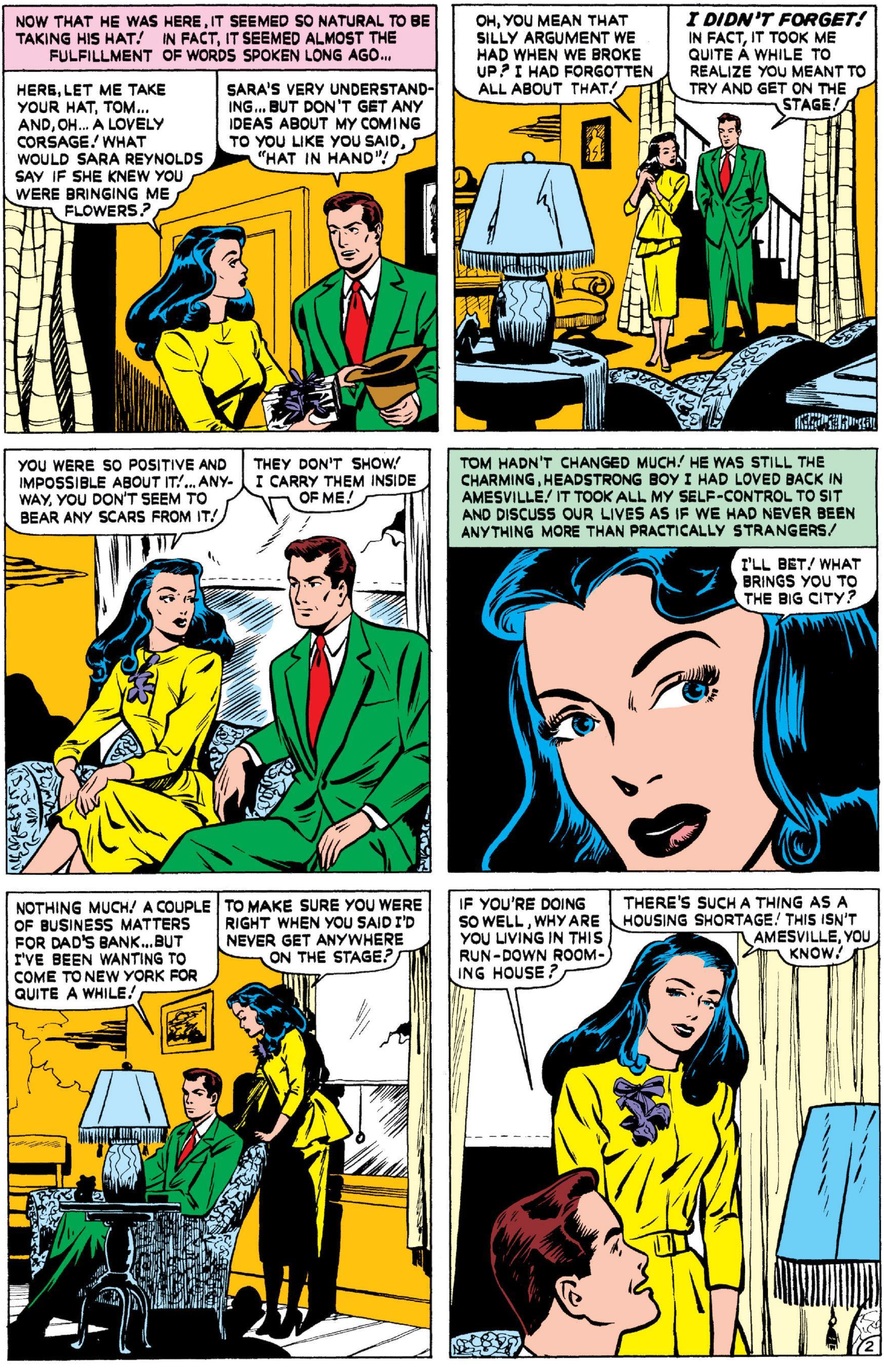
6161


AS I HURRIED TO THE ROOMING-HOUSE DOOR, MY HEARTBEATS MATCHED MY RACING FEET! I WAS ANNOYED AT MY REACTION... AT BEING BROUGHT FACE TO FACE WITH A PART OF MY LIFE I HAD LOCKED OUT OF MY HEART TWO YEARS AGO...
I'LL GET IT, MRS. HANSEN!
IF IT'S THAT YOUNG MAN WHO CALLED, YOU BETTER NOT LET HIM SEE YOU'RE SO ANXIOUS!


MRS. HANSEN, MY LANDLADY, WAS RIGHT! I COULDN'T LET HIM SEE ME LIKE THIS! I FORCED MYSELF TO BE DELIBERATE IN MY ACTIONS, EVEN THOUGH I FELT ANYTHING BUT CALM...
GET A GRIP ON YOURSELF, GIRL! YOU HAVE A PART TO PLAY!


TOM CONNERS!... COME IN!
HELLO, LILA! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME...


IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
I COULDN'T VISIT NEW YORK WITHOUT SEEING MY FAVORITE EX-FIANCÉE... YOU'RE AS BEAUTIFUL AS EVER!


NOW THAT HE WAS HERE, IT SEEMED SO NATURAL TO BE TAKING HIS HAT! IN FACT, IT SEEMED ALMOST THE FULFILLMENT OF WORDS SPOKEN LONG AGO...
HERE, LET ME TAKE YOUR HAT, TOM... AND, OH... A LOVELY CORSAGE! WHAT WOULD SARA REYNOLDS SAY IF SHE KNEW YOU WERE BRINGING ME FLOWERS?
SARA'S VERY UNDERSTANDING... BUT DON'T GET ANY IDEAS ABOUT MY COMING TO YOU LIKE YOU SAID, "HAT IN HAND"!
OH, YOU MEAN THAT SILLY ARGUMENT WE HAD WHEN WE BROKE UP? I HAD FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT THAT!
I DIDN'T FORGET! IN FACT, IT TOOK ME QUITE A WHILE TO REALIZE YOU MEANT TO TRY AND GET ON THE STAGE!
YOU WERE SO POSITIVE AND IMPOSSIBLE ABOUT IT!... ANYWAY, YOU DON'T SEEM TO BEAR ANY SCARS FROM IT!
THEY DON'T SHOW! I CARRY THEM INSIDE OF ME!
TOM HADN'T CHANGED MUCH! HE WAS STILL THE CHARMING, HEADSTRONG BOY I HAD LOVED BACK IN AMESVILLE! IT TOOK ALL MY SELF-CONTROL TO SIT AND DISCUSS OUR LIVES AS IF WE HAD NEVER BEEN ANYTHING MORE THAN PRACTICALLY STRANGERS!
I'LL BET! WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE BIG CITY?
NOTHING MUCH! A COUPLE OF BUSINESS MATTERS FOR DAD'S BANK... BUT I'VE BEEN WANTING TO COME TO NEW YORK FOR QUITE A WHILE!
TO MAKE SURE YOU WERE RIGHT WHEN YOU SAID I'D NEVER GET ANYWHERE ON THE STAGE?
IF YOU'RE DOING SO WELL, WHY ARE YOU LIVING IN THIS RUN-DOWN ROOMING HOUSE?
THERE'S SUCH A THING AS A HOUSING SHORTAGE! THIS ISN'T AMESVILLE, YOU KNOW!
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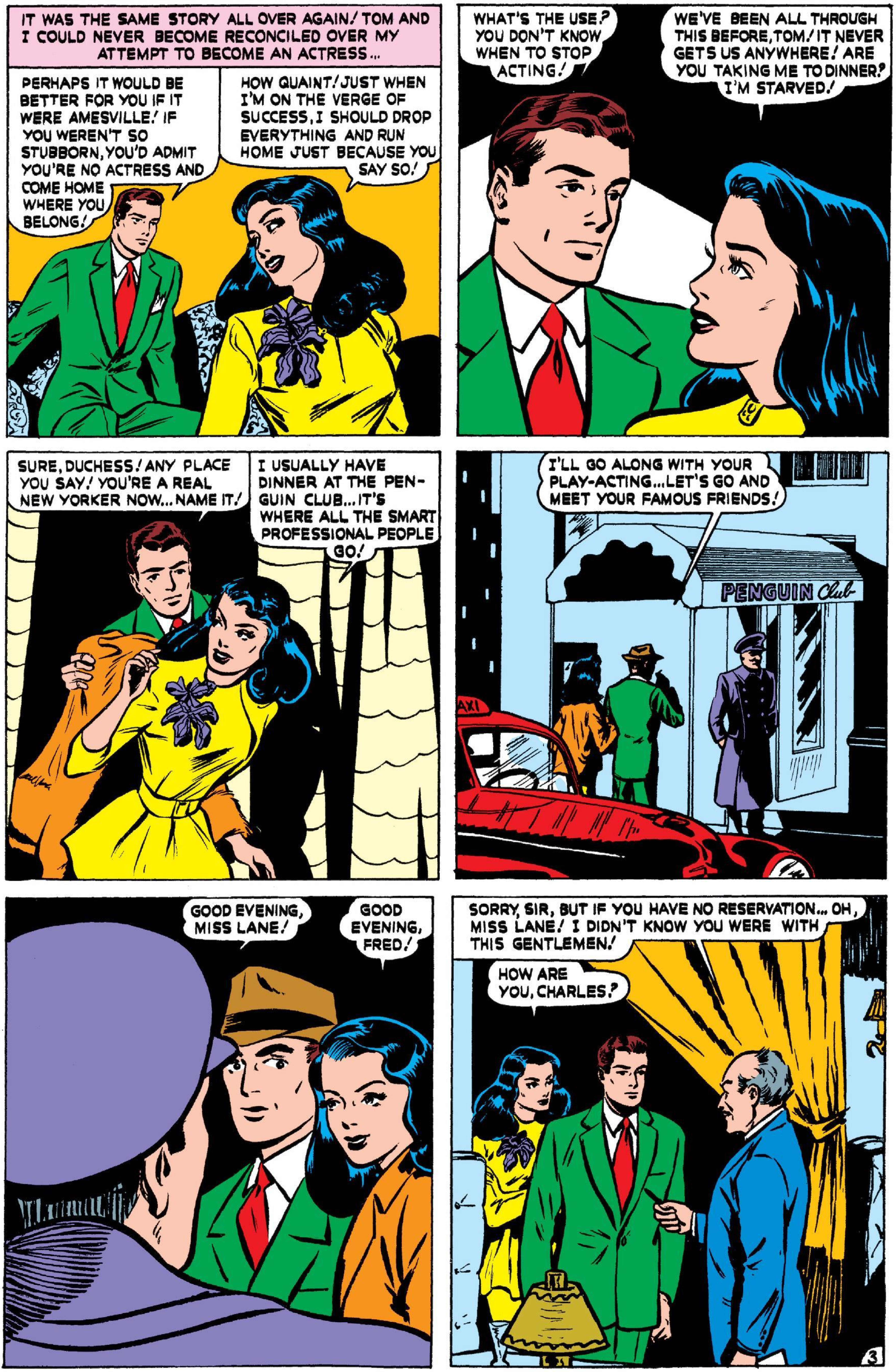
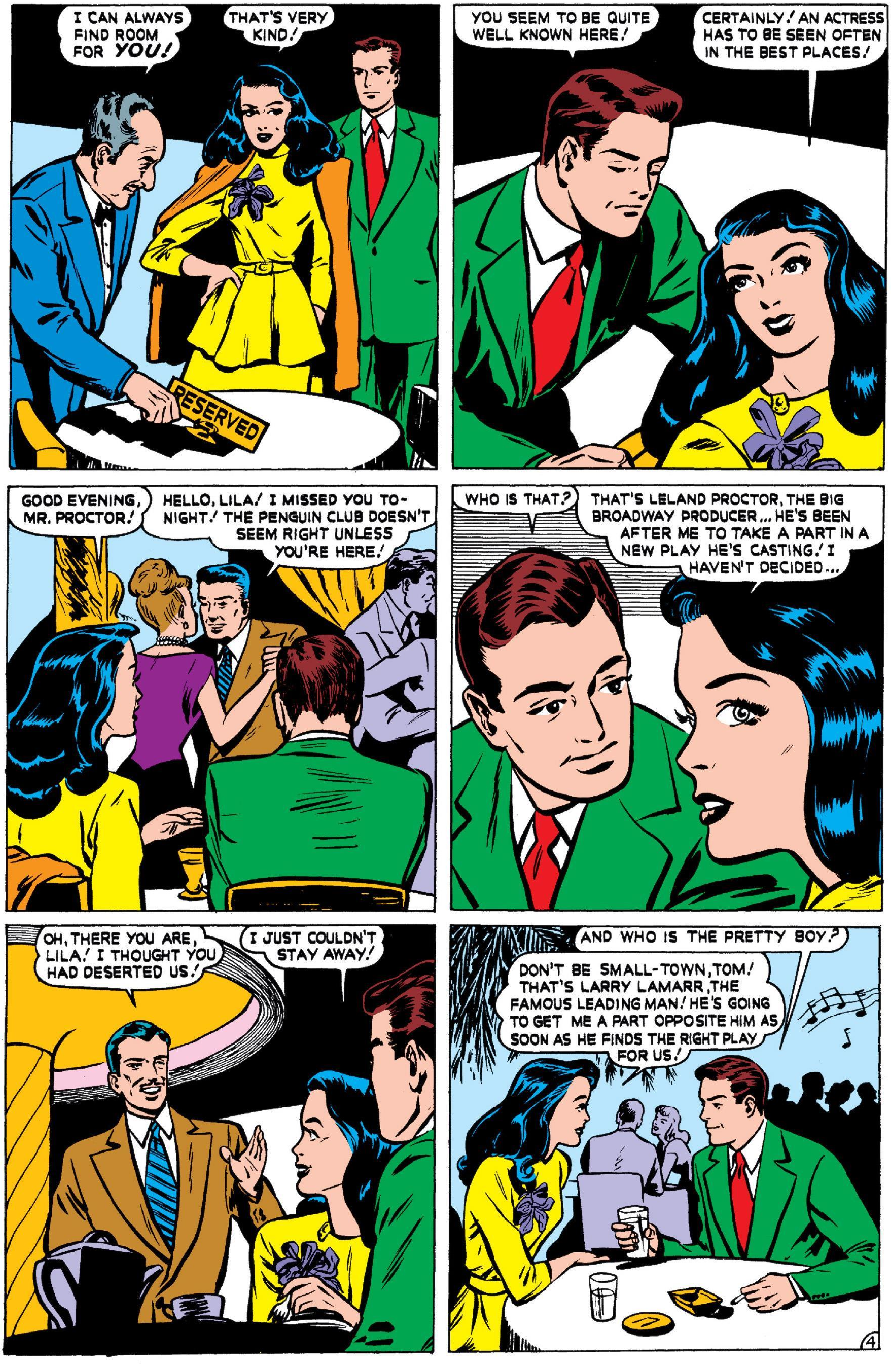

IT WAS THE SAME STORY ALL OVER AGAIN! TOM AND I COULD NEVER BECOME RECONCILED OVER MY ATTEMPT TO BECOME AN ACTRESS...
PERHAPS IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR YOU IF IT WERE AMESVILLE! IF YOU WEREN'T SO STUBBORN, YOU'D ADMIT YOU'RE NO ACTRESS AND COME HOME WHERE YOU BELONG!
HOW QUAINT! JUST WHEN I'M ON THE VERGE OF SUCCESS, I SHOULD DROP EVERYTHING AND RUN HOME JUST BECAUSE YOU SAY SO!
WHAT'S THE USE? YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN TO STOP ACTING!
WE'VE BEEN ALL THROUGH THIS BEFORE, TOM! IT NEVER GETS US ANYWHERE! ARE YOU TAKING ME TO DINNER? I'M STARVED!
SURE, DUCHESS! ANY PLACE YOU SAY! YOU'RE A REAL NEW YORKER NOW... NAME IT!
I USUALLY HAVE DINNER AT THE PENGUIN CLUB... IT'S WHERE ALL THE SMART PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE GO!
I'LL GO ALONG WITH YOUR PLAY-ACTING... LET'S GO AND MEET YOUR FAMOUS FRIENDS!
PENGUIN Club
AXI
GOOD EVENING, MISS LANE!
GOOD EVENING, FRED!
SORRY, SIR, BUT IF YOU HAVE NO RESERVATION... OH, MISS LANE! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE WITH THIS GENTLEMEN!
HOW ARE YOU, CHARLES?


I CAN ALWAYS FIND ROOM FOR *YOU!*
THAT'S VERY KIND!
RESERVED
YOU SEEM TO BE QUITE WELL KNOWN HERE!
CERTAINLY! AN ACTRESS HAS TO BE SEEN OFTEN IN THE BEST PLACES!
GOOD EVENING, MR. PROCTOR!
HELLO, LILA! I MISSED YOU TO-NIGHT! THE PENGUIN CLUB DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT UNLESS YOU'RE HERE!
WHO IS THAT?
THAT'S LELAND PROCTOR, THE BIG BROADWAY PRODUCER... HE'S BEEN AFTER ME TO TAKE A PART IN A NEW PLAY HE'S CASTING! I HAVEN'T DECIDED...
OH, THERE YOU ARE, LILA! I THOUGHT YOU HAD DESERTED US!
I JUST COULDN'T STAY AWAY!
AND WHO IS THE PRETTY BOY?
DON'T BE SMALL-TOWN, TOM! THAT'S LARRY LAMARR, THE FAMOUS LEADING MAN! HE'S GOING TO GET ME A PART OPPOSITE HIM AS SOON AS HE FINDS THE RIGHT PLAY FOR US!
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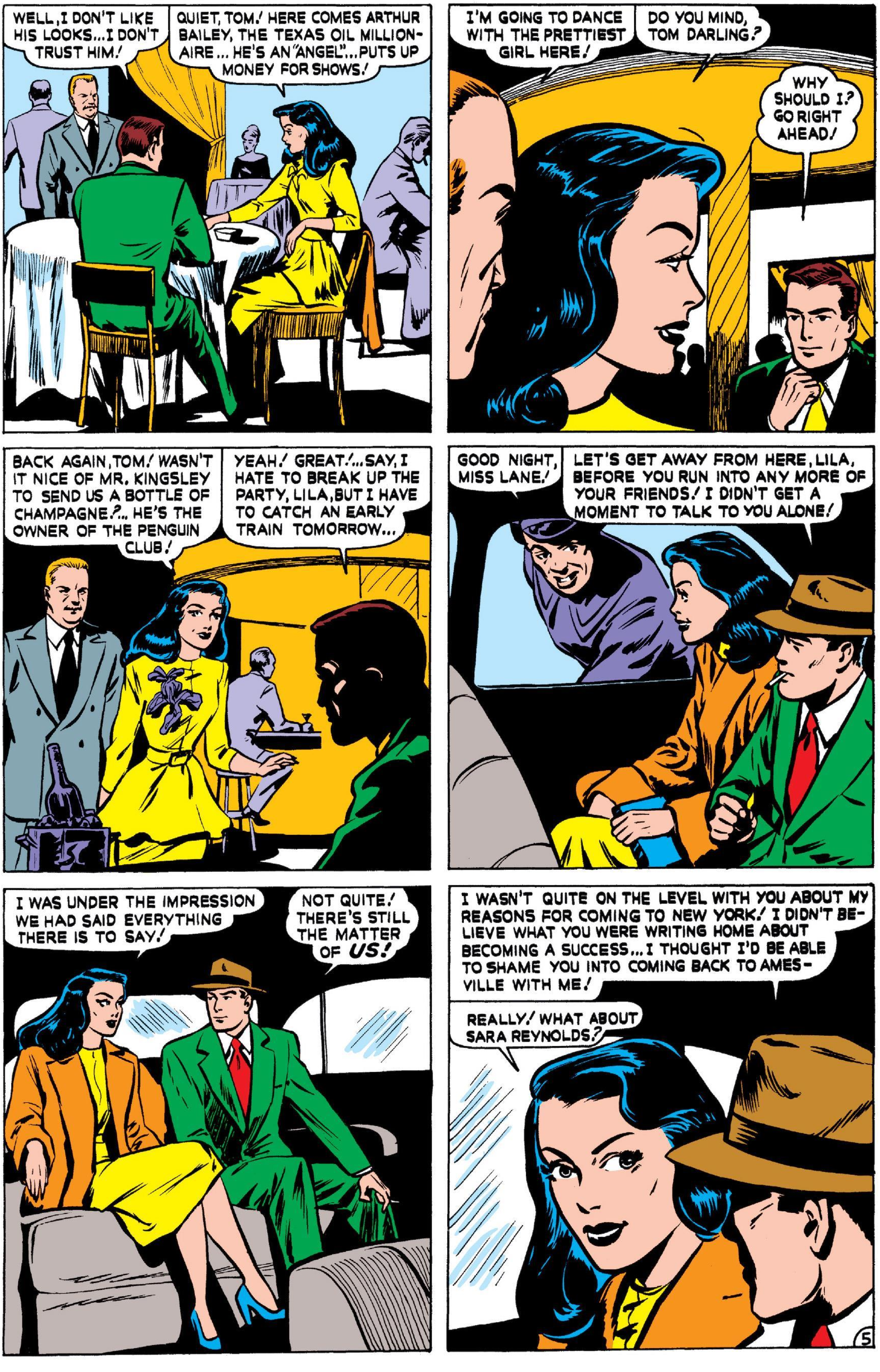
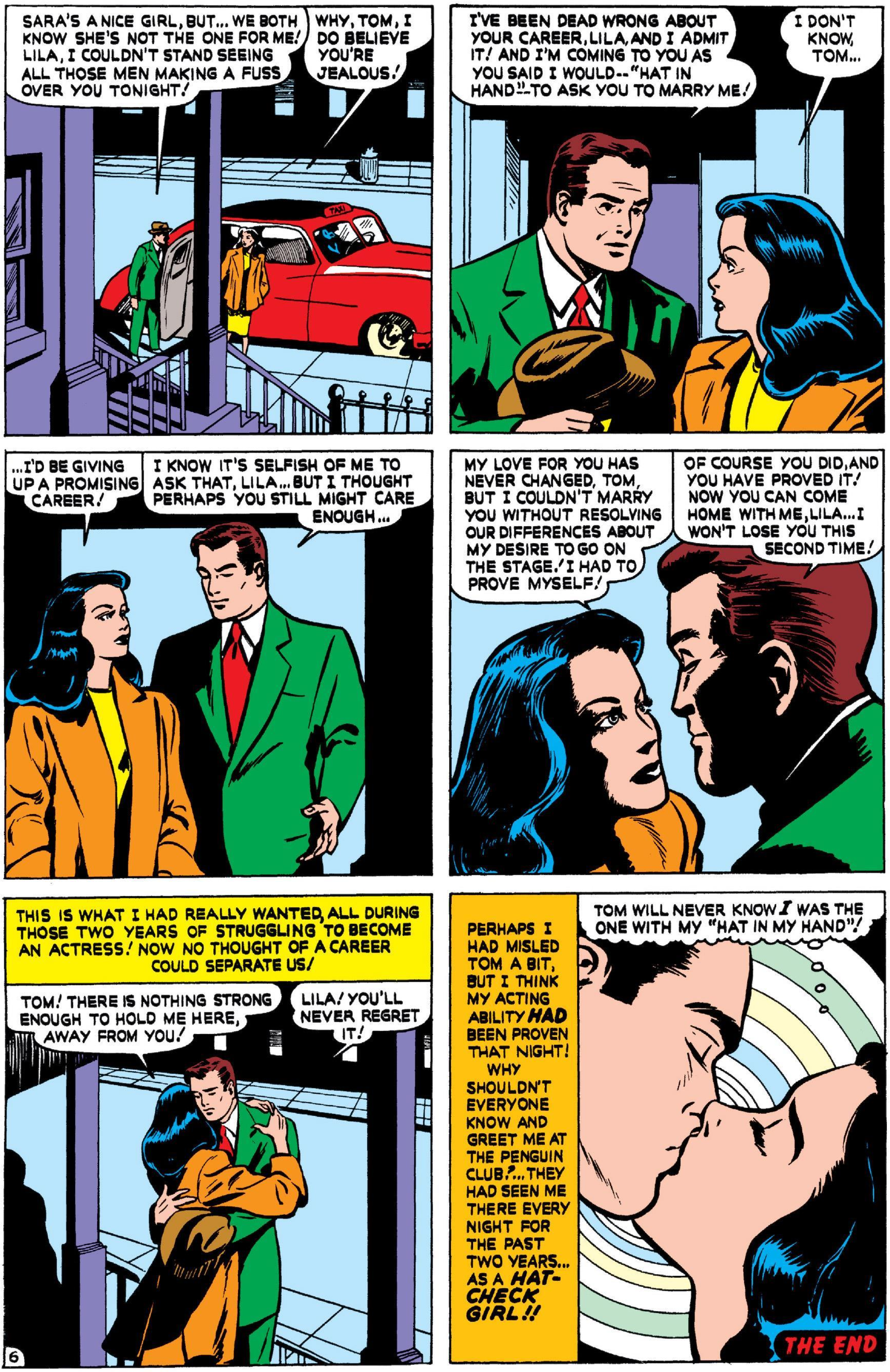

WELL, I DON'T LIKE HIS LOOKS... I DON'T TRUST HIM!
QUIET, TOM! HERE COMES ARTHUR BAILEY, THE TEXAS OIL MILLIONAIRE... HE'S AN "ANGEL"... PUTS UP MONEY FOR SHOWS!
I'M GOING TO DANCE WITH THE PRETTIEST GIRL HERE!
DO YOU MIND, TOM DARLING?
WHY SHOULD I? GO RIGHT AHEAD!
BACK AGAIN, TOM! WASN'T IT NICE OF MR. KINGSLEY TO SEND US A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE?... HE'S THE OWNER OF THE PENGUIN CLUB!
YEAH! GREAT!... SAY, I HATE TO BREAK UP THE PARTY, LILA, BUT I HAVE TO CATCH AN EARLY TRAIN TOMORROW...
GOOD NIGHT, MISS LANE!
LET'S GET AWAY FROM HERE, LILA, BEFORE YOU RUN INTO ANY MORE OF YOUR FRIENDS! I DIDN'T GET A MOMENT TO TALK TO YOU ALONE!
I WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION WE HAD SAID EVERYTHING THERE IS TO SAY!
NOT QUITE! THERE'S STILL THE MATTER OF US!
I WASN'T QUITE ON THE LEVEL WITH YOU ABOUT MY REASONS FOR COMING TO NEW YORK! I DIDN'T BELIEVE WHAT YOU WERE WRITING HOME ABOUT BECOMING A SUCCESS... I THOUGHT I'D BE ABLE TO SHAME YOU INTO COMING BACK TO AMESVILLE WITH ME!
REALLY! WHAT ABOUT SARA REYNOLDS?


SARA'S A NICE GIRL, BUT... WE BOTH KNOW SHE'S NOT THE ONE FOR ME! LILA, I COULDN'T STAND SEEING ALL THOSE MEN MAKING A FUSS OVER YOU TONIGHT!
WHY, TOM, I DO BELIEVE YOU'RE JEALOUS!
TAXI
I'VE BEEN DEAD WRONG ABOUT YOUR CAREER, LILA, AND I ADMIT IT! AND I'M COMING TO YOU AS YOU SAID I WOULD--"HAT IN HAND!"--TO ASK YOU TO MARRY ME!
I DON'T KNOW, TOM...
...I'D BE GIVING UP A PROMISING CAREER!
I KNOW IT'S SELFISH OF ME TO ASK THAT, LILA... BUT I THOUGHT PERHAPS YOU STILL MIGHT CARE ENOUGH...
MY LOVE FOR YOU HAS NEVER CHANGED, TOM, BUT I COULDN'T MARRY YOU WITHOUT RESOLVING OUR DIFFERENCES ABOUT MY DESIRE TO GO ON THE STAGE! I HAD TO PROVE MYSELF!
OF COURSE YOU DID, AND YOU HAVE PROVED IT! NOW YOU CAN COME HOME WITH ME, LILA... I WON'T LOSE YOU THIS SECOND TIME!
THIS IS WHAT I HAD REALLY WANTED, ALL DURING THOSE TWO YEARS OF STRUGGLING TO BECOME AN ACTRESS! NOW NO THOUGHT OF A CAREER COULD SEPARATE US!
TOM! THERE IS NOTHING STRONG ENOUGH TO HOLD ME HERE, AWAY FROM YOU!
LILA! YOU'LL NEVER REGRET IT!
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PERHAPS I HAD MISLED TOM A BIT, BUT I THINK MY ACTING ABILITY **HAD** BEEN PROVEN THAT NIGHT! WHY SHOULDN'T EVERYONE KNOW AND GREET ME AT THE PENGUIN CLUB?... THEY HAD SEEN ME THERE EVERY NIGHT FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS... AS A ***HAT-CHECK GIRL!!***
TOM WILL NEVER KNOW *I* WAS THE ONE WITH MY "HAT IN MY HAND"!
THE END